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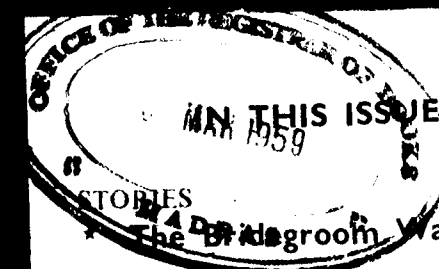
MARCH, 1959.

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INDIA

MAGAZINE



STORIES
* The Bridegroom Was Missing!

- * The Girl Who Strayed
- * Parting Of The Ways
- * Kamla Dear !
(HUMOROUS PLAYLET)

ARTICLES

- * On Queues!
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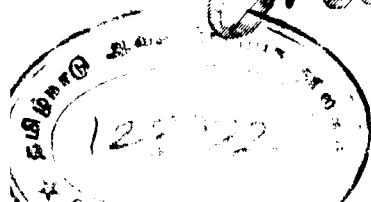
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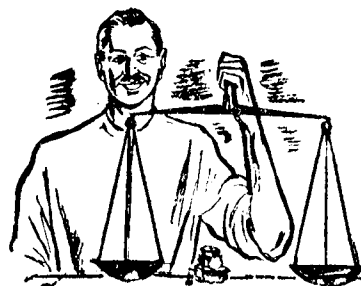
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FOR MARCH, 1959.

LEADING MONTHLY FOR HOME & FAMILY

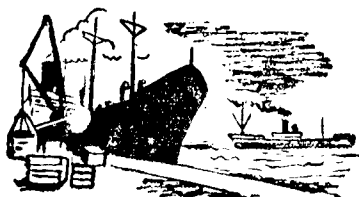
TWO Great BENEFITS



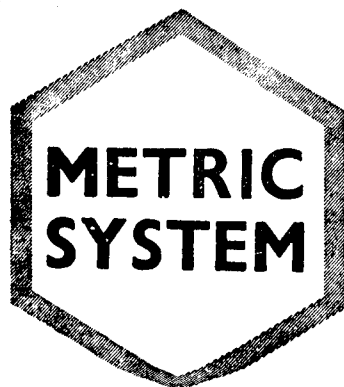
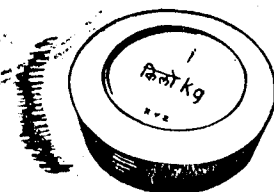
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INDIA MAGAZINE

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EDITORIAL

India Magazine

FOURTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

VOLUME 4

MARCH 1959

No. 1

PRESIDENT TO PRIME MINISTER

CONGRESS has good reasons to congratulate itself on the election of Smt. Indira Gandhi as its President. Three generations of the Nehru family have dedicated themselves to the service of the country—Motilal, Jawaharlal and Indira. That indeed is a unique record.

The new President will be confronted with a harder task than the one that faced her grandfather or her own father. Congress today is a divided house and does not command the prestige and influence that it wielded in the Gandhian era. Shri Dhebar's stewardship raised high hopes that Congress would become stronger. It is sad to have to record that he has not succeeded in his aim. Internal dissensions have grown sharper. After the linguistic reorganisation our sense of national unity is unfortunately not so pronounced. Congress under Smt. Indira Gandhi is not the same mighty organisation under Sardar Patel. In Kerala it is almost a zero. In Madras it is communal in outlook. In Andhra it is fast losing its hold on the masses. In Bengal it has to face a trial of strength with the Leftists. In the Punjab it has to tide over a crisis every time.

It is up to the new President to weld the Congress into better shape and infuse new blood into it. There is no doubt that she will rise equal to the occasion and will render a better account to the nation than her grandfather or her own father. She looks gentle and mild but she can be firm and unbending like steel if occasion demands it. Who will succeed Nehru as Prime Minister it is easy to guess now. Our sisters in particular may take legitimate pride in the fact that they have a powerful champion in Smt. Indira Gandhi. We wish her all success.

ATTRACTIONS OF A QUEUE!

By S. B. KULKARNI

‘DOES not a man in the modern mechanised world spend a quarter of his life-time in standing in queues?’ This question peeped into my mind when I read that an English lady spends on an average three years of her life in standing before the mirror.

And that is no exaggeration at all! From cradle to grave and from morning to night, everyone has to get into a queue of one sort or another. No sooner do we wake up than we have to fall in a line before the bath-room. Most of us live in portions, you know. Then follows the queue in eating-houses. And then come in chains of the queues at the booking offices, bus-stops, lifts and so on.

In these days of ‘isms’ I may say that ‘Queueism’ has now become an all-pervading ism. It is very interesting to observe

how this new cult plays an important role in the modern world.

A young friend of mine is an irregular fellow. He misses the bus due, of course, to a long row of passengers and is compelled to wait for another half an hour. By this he loses many lectures in the colleges. This is not so distressing an example as the one I read of in one of the stories. There the hero misses the bus and misses his “miss” also (thereby losing a sweet “kiss” too!). Most of us are inclined to conclude that most of our successes and failures centre round the nucleus of the “Queue.” We come across the exchanges of the same grievance and that is: it is this Demoness Queue who has thrown us into the crevice of a dangerous delay!

But I don’t agree with them. I am neither distressed at the

thought of an unending parade of passengers nor dumb-founded by the fear of ‘so-called’ dangerous delay. Nay, I purposely lose the bus due to the attraction of a queue.

‘Queue’ to me seems to be the symbol of ‘Hope’. It is perfectly in the position of being deified as the Spirit of Hope and worshipped. Nothing else has so vehemently imbued man with hopefulness as the Queue. In war and love, punctualities are paid and procrastinations punished. But in this warless time of ours, there is no incentive for a man to be punctual and regular. The void is filled in by the device of a queue. If one has to catch the 10 a.m. bus he goes to the bus stop a quarter of an hour before at 9-45 a.m. in order to stand in the endless queue of numberless passengers. The bus-stop seems to be the battlefield where everyone runs the race of surprising others. The ‘Queue’ teaches men not only the valuable qualities of regularity and hopefulness but also those of patience and silent suffering!

Queue is like a chain of multi-coloured lively and lovely gems. We meet there all types of men. We see there our friends and foes. We rub shoulders with those of others with a variety of fashions and languages. Everyone speaks on his specialised subject. It becomes very interesting to hear the variety of topics discussed. One may become tired of the lecture of a

professor in the class-room, but not the least of standing in the ‘Queue.’ Really, it is a ‘romantic experience’! The enjoyment of experiencing the diversity of life and seeing in it the true mirth and colour of happiness and sorrow is the special attraction of the queue for me. I may say with Shakespeare that life is an interesting tale told by the variety of passengers in a very long queue, waiting for the bus and signifying everything.”

If I get the very first bus, I become unhappy because I feel that I will have to lose sight of the picturesque side of the life that we get in queues; and also the virtues of patience and hopefulness which we do not get by keeping before our eyes the ideals of great souls or by reading holy books.

Those who call the missing of the bus as an unfortunate event are in my opinion, entire pessimists and do not know the charms of missing it. ‘Q’ in their view stands for a big question mark but in my case, it stands for a curious query! ‡

SHIRT FOR HORSE!

Mother: “Daughter, before you become serious with that boy friend of yours, be sure that he is kind and considerate.”

Daughter: “Oh, I’m sure of that, Mother. Why, only the other day he told me that he had put his shirt on a horse that was scratched.”

THE RESPONSE

By MADHUSUDHAN

[The landlord threatened to drive out the defaulting tenant. The young wife was frantic but she couldn't trace out her husband...]

SAMPURNI was rudely woken up at about 11 p.m. She stared about uneasily. A small chimney lamp was burning dimly. Her little boy Kumar and one-year-old girl Usha were sleeping peacefully on either side. The loud knock continued and the door rattled. Who could it be, she wondered. She opened the window and looked through the bars. It was absolutely dark. Her neighbouring co-tenants had gone upstairs to sleep.

"Can't you open the door and answer me, young woman?" growled a man.

She at once knew that it was Kuber, the old landlord. He had a torch-light in his hand and flashed the rays at her face. She shivered in fear and hastily knotted her blouse. She forgot that she had been suckling her baby an hour before. And she knew there was a greedy

lecherous look in Kuber's eyes. Though he was past fifty-five, he was a very wicked man. His only pastime was to hunt after nice young girls. Her co-tenants had often told several hair-raising tales about him.

"Where is your husband?" he demanded sharply. "I have not seen him for three months. Don't you know that he has not paid the rent? He was so regular in those days. What has gone wrong? Where are we to go for money if the tenants default like this for months? I am told that he comes late in the nights. That is why I have come here now."

Sampurni staggered under the sharp blow of his rebuke. Kedar, her husband, used to return late from the film studio. But for the past four days he had kept away from home. She was in the dark as to what

happened to him. He had his stock excuse: "Had to go on outdoor shooting." She was too good a wife to protest or even to complain of her loneliness. She had never understood his ways, but was content to love him.

OF late, however, he had become shifty, moody, restless and irregular. He brought very little money to pay the household bills and had pawned her jewels one by one. She wondered what he was doing with his salary which exceeded Rs. 175. She wrote for money to her parents and they readily sent her remittances whenever she wanted. But the very idea of applying to them was humiliating. Moreover, her old mother had fallen seriously ill. She was too old. So she decided not to ask them for any more help. Some casual friend of hers had told her in so many words that Kedar was running after a film actress by name Rupa. Her friend's husband had heard about this gossip from another friend, who in turn had heard of it from... Before she could complete the tale, Sampurni had gone, a filmy curtain of tears having blinded her eyes. What could she do in the face of this cruel truth? She rushed to her little residence and wept for hours until she could feel her face swollen. Kumar, her darling, too, cried aloud just because his mother was in tears. She hugged him and kissed Usha who was kicking her legs vigorously and gurgling aloud.

All these events flashed across her mind as she looked sleepily through the window bars at the landlord. He was impatient. "You must pay me Rs. 75 tomorrow—the total rent for three months—or I will throw you out," he threatened.

"Please be merciful, sir. Give me at least three days' time. I will find out where my husband has gone and pay you on the fourth day."

"Impossible, woman," he almost shouted. "I hear your husband is running around with some hussy. I think he has left you. But he is a fool to neglect such a pretty creature like you. I would like to help you indeed. Why don't you come to my room? I have a plan for you."

At this outrageous suggestion she grew red in the face and indignantly shut the window with a bang and screwed the bolt of the shutter. She could hear him walking away with an angry snort. With a heaving heart and moist eyes she sat on her bed, thinking hard. Sleep had deserted her eyes.

EARLY next morning she entrusted her children to the care of her co-tenant upstairs and went out in a rickshaw to hunt for her husband. She went to his studio three miles away and enquired for Kedar. The green-room expert, Prabhu, a middle-aged man, recognized her and spoke courteous words. But he

was halting and evasive in his replies to her questions. When he, however, saw the agonised expression on her face he paused for a minute and looked thoughtful. Then he said, "To tell you the truth, madam, I believe he has gone out of the city with a friend. I don't know when he comes back. But if you can give me a note I shall try my best to contact him and hand over the letter. I am not sure when I will be able to meet him. I will do my best. That is all the assurance I can give you."

SHE thanked him heartily and looked hesitant for a few minutes. She then wrote a few lines on a slip of paper, folded it and handed it to him. Smiling at him with a warm heart and folding her palms respectfully, she climbed into her rickshaw and went back home.

Prabhu gazed at the receding rickshaw until it disappeared from view. He owed his present job to Kedar who saved him from starvation and disgrace. But his friend was behaving disgracefully. He had forgotten his beautiful wife and was infatuated with Rupa who was a pretty doll but had no brains. The fool that Kedar was, he was unaware that the actress had a heartless, ruthless woman with a fickle mind, who changed her lovers even as she changed her saris. Prabhu was in a way friendly with Rupa but at no time had he any romantic inclinations towards her. There were occasions when Rupa had

cast her net wide for him but he contemptuously kept at a safe distance. He knew that Kedar spent all his earnings on that flirt. Only last week he had presented her a costly gold wrist-watch just to win a smile and a kiss from her. All the time Kedar was waiting for Rupa in her house, she was in the Director's bungalow, taking some useful tips from him for a difficult scene. Prabhu knew how it would all end. Rupa would conclude that tuition with another hour of love lessons in the Director's bed. One day, Prabhu told himself, he would do a bit of plain-speaking to Kedar and open his eyes to his criminal folly.

It was getting late. He left the studio in a taxi and went round in search of the erring pair. That day Rupa had no work in the studio and she had gone out of the city in her car with Kedar. There were many picnic spots to which they could have gone. He tried by phone to contact them, he rushed to three or four of their favourite haunts; by about 10 p.m. he shrugged his shoulders and decided to give up the search.

ALL this time Sampurni had been eagerly hoping for the return of her husband. But when it was getting on for eleven she became frantic and desperate. She was a fool to have trusted Prabhu. He had evidently forgotten about that note of hers to her husband, urging him to return home at once and pay

the landlord Rs. 75. She added a warning line about his wicked intentions, saying that he had threatened to call for the amount at 11 p.m. as on the previous day.

She was rather sleepy when she heard a slight knock on the door which her husband usually made. She jumped down from the cot and eagerly opened the door to confront Kuber with a meaningful leer spread all over his face. Her face went white as death at his sight. She had never thought that he would adopt this ruse to get into her room.

"You have got the rent, dear?" he demanded, slowly inching his way towards her cot. "Have I not stipulated payment tonight?"

"I will somehow pay you tomorrow, sir. I have sent word to my husband. Tomorrow I promise..." she stammered.

She retreated towards the wall with her heart beating like a sledge-hammer. What could she do now, oh God? Everything would be lost.

HE suddenly grabbed her shoulder with his right hand. "Listen, young woman. If you surrender to me now, I will cancel all your husband's dues. Otherwise, I will take what I want with force, see. I have sent away your co-tenants to my daughter's house and they won't be back before tomorrow

morning. Even if you shout and scream it is no use. Nobody will hear you. Don't be a fool. Yield to my wishes. You are starving, I know. I will give you plenty of money. If you resist I will throw you and your children out of my house into the cold night right now."

SHE began to run but he caught her helplessly in his arms and kissed her on her lips. But she bit him on his cheek and shouted and kicked at him. Blood spurted from his face and he was livid with fury. He slapped her in the face and threw her on the floor. "Hell!" he shouted. "Who is knocking at the door?" Somebody was shouting, "Open the door, Sampurni!" Here are three of us to come to your rescue."

At one jump Sampurni sprang up and opened the door. Kuber tried to dart out of the room but two powerful arms swung round him while another man hit him on the head with a stick. The old man slumped down in a swoon.

When Sampurni saw that it was Prabhu and her husband and yet another friend who had come to her rescue, she had stopped crying and suddenly fainted away. By next morning Kedar and his family had moved to another house. He kept the promise given to Prabhu not to desert his wife under any circumstances.

CLUBS FOR FOOLS!

By SHRIDAR

THIS time last year there was a proposal to convene an All-India Fools' Conference. There were several who derided the announcement. That it caused a wide titter in high circles was evident but since there was no further news it is to be presumed that the conference has been postponed. Probably the delegates thought that the full blaze of publicity would beat upon them. Or did the authorities refuse permission to hold a conference? This last poser, being least likely, may be ruled out, for who does not like fools?

But for fools the world would be a dull and drab place indeed. They it is who bungle and appear in the most absurd and awkward scrapes and send ripples of laughter around. In those days when monarchs and maharajahs shaped the destinies of our forebears, they could hardly get on without Fools and Clowns. The more grotesque their ways and utterances the merrier the rulers and the ruled. Nor should we forget that the first of April is a sacred day set apart for Fools—when pranks are played upon one and all. If somebody

pulls the leg of the most intelligent and wisest of men, it is not a matter to be frowned upon.

Now, on the eve of April Fools' Day let us formulate some useful suggestions. A conference may be an unwieldy affair and far from feasible. But a Fools' Club is easy to start and manage. In one of his famous essays Steele sponsored the idea of a club for ugly men and women, and he laid down a test that must be passed by prospective members. Anyone could easily gain admittance if he or she had some visible physical defect—like a too prominent nose, a squint in one eye or preferably both, a misshapen face, a twisted arm, a pair of bandy legs, a figure shaped like Z, a mouth with front teeth missing. No handsome man or lovely woman could come anywhere near the premises of the club or attend the juicy dinners or treats given in honour of the members. Steele's idea obviously was to induce in the ugly a sense of pride.

During the Second World War American soldiers camping in India started what was known as

a Cranks' Club but since it was strictly exclusive its aims and objects were not advertised and the proceedings were shrouded in great secrecy. We would not have known of the Club's existence if an American periodical—I think it was "Everybody's Digest"—had not come out with an article in praise of it.

So I do not see why Fools' Clubs should not be established in every city and town with a central organization to ensure their all-India character. They will be a roaring success provided fools only are admitted after a thorough screening. No intelligent or wise man or woman should be enrolled. A silly look or grin must always register itself on the facial dial of a person. If a man brings a testimonial from his office to the effect that his boss in office called him "fool" at least on a dozen occasions he should be admitted at once. Or he must have committed some ridiculous mistakes—he might even be a politician—that brought discredit upon his party or made the most absurd or inappropriate or indiscreet remark that gave away some vital party secret; he should be eligible for membership. If a man can prove that he rushed in where angels would fear to tread, he must be nominated as the President of the Club and he can occupy the chair until someone else comes to claim credit for a more astonishing achievement. It is time fools started clubs if they could not meet in conference for the wise will be-

come wiser and the foolish more so!

A bulletin or periodical once or twice a month to record and publicise the activities of the members will prove to be a best seller. Cash prizes may be announced every month for the best fool's story or for the most ludicrous incident in which a numskull figures prominently. When they are sufficiently numerically strong, they can make their demands and call upon the authorities to give guarantees for safeguarding and improving their status. And no Government in power can ignore them for even fools have votes.

FUSSY

A man on holiday was very fussy indeed about his breakfast eggs. They had to be boiled for exactly three-and-a-half minutes. So seldom did he get them exactly to suit him that he finally bought a stop-watch.

"Tell your cook," he instructed the waitress at the hotel, "to time my eggs with this. He should be able to do the job all right now."

However, when the eggs came, he bellowed. "Waitress! These eggs aren't even half-cooked. I can't eat them. They're no good at all!"

"Neither is your watch, mister!" the waitress snapped, thumping it down beside his plate. "The darned thing stopped five seconds after the cook put it in the boiling water with the eggs!"

Kamla Dear!

By PADMA RAJAN

[Characters: Mr. Naga Nath, a company officer on transfer, his wife Kamla, her younger brother, Sundar, and the new servant Govind.]

Scene: A small but neat house in a suburb of the city. Time 11 p.m. A dark sultry night.]

Naga Nath: Kamla, we are most lucky, I should say, in getting this beautiful house. Only yesterday I contacted the house-broker and within a trice I took possession of this house. Lucky, aren't we?

Sundar (clapping his hands): Wonderful, I say. The house is situated at the end of the road with fields all round. Throw open the windows and a good breeze blows in. As they say, you have to do *tapasya* like Bhageeratha of old for months and then you get a hotch-potch portion with a tinny, tiny roof and broken floor and no windows.

Kamla: How much did you pay for this, dear, all in all?

N. N.: You calculate, dear. I shall tell you. Three months' rent in advance Rs. 300—at the rate of Rs. 100. Then another month's rent on the spot. That comes to...how much?

K. Rs. 300, dear.

S.: Sister, when did you do arithmetic last time? It is Rs. 400, brother-in-law. Kamla must be sleepy.

K. Sleepy, brother? No, I thought I heard someone coughing outside the door. Well, Rs. 400 all right, as Sundar says.

N. N. Then I paid the broker Rs. 250. He demanded Rs. 300 as brokerage but I beat him down to Rs. 250 and entertained him to lunch. The greedy old fellow! How much does it all come to?

K. (scratching her head): Rs. 800, I suppose?

S. Sister, I am ashamed of you. I never dreamt you had such a poor head for figures. Rs. 650, is it not, brother-in-law? But Rs. 250 is a high figure for brokerage, don't you think?

N. N. The blackguard said that ten people were competing for this house and were prepared to give him more. He said my face reminded him of a lost brother of his. He made another interesting revelation.

K. (eagerly): What was that?

N. N. You see, I arrived here yesterday and negotiated with the broker. You two, Kamla and Sundar, came here straight from the station this evening. Only this morning it appears that the previous tenants of this house vacated it.

K. What is there interesting about it? I don't follow you.

N. N. Suppose they had not vacated the premises, what would have happened? Can't you imagine?

S. Easy to guess. We would have had to spend the night in some hotel.

N. N. Why just one night? It might be days or weeks. Of course, the Assistant Manager of the Company invited us to stay as his guests but he gets Rs. 400 less than myself and is decided-

ly inferior in status. I sternly told him not to bother.

K. He is a fussy fellow and somewhat clumsy in manners too. He showed all his teeth to me at the station.

N. N. Did he? Impertinent ass! I will soon show him his place. Who does he think we are?

K. I am sleepy, dear. I shall go to bed. The breeze in the front room is so inviting. I feel I haven't slept for ages. The railway journey was so tiring. The bugs kept me awake.

N. N. Govind, you fool, you are standing and sleeping. See the fun of it.

G.: No, master! I am wide awake. I have bolted all the doors and secured the windows.

N. N. Then turn off the switch and sleep in the hall. You must get up at 4 a.m. and prepare hot water.

G. Yes, master. I shall buy charcoal at 4 o'clock and get hot water ready.

S. What a blockhead! Who will keep a charcoal depot open at four in the morning? Kamla, why didn't you ask him to buy charcoal in the evening itself?

K. We got carrier meals from the hotel and forgot all about firewood and charcoal, dear.

(Grumbling, K. and N. N. go to bed in the front room. Sundar-

THE AFFAIR

[Shyamala was a gay flirt and her husband seemed totally unaware. But the whole village was talking about the affair. . .]

goes into another room. Govind remains in the hall).

K. (wakes up husband after an hour): Someone is calling, dear. Listen carefully. I am awfully frightened.

N. N. (equally scared): Who is that? What did he say?

K. It is some rude fellow. Listen again! A small stone hit the window. He first said, 'Kamla! Open the door or I will burst it open.'

N. N. Your name! How does he know?

K. Listen again, dear. He says that I have to account for Rs. 20 more. 'Will I open the door or not?' There are two more men waiting, and that he must be admitted first. Otherwise he will give me a bloody nose!

N. N. Sundar! Govind! Come here at once. Switch on the light.

K. Are you out of your senses, dear? Go and lock the door on the inside. Wake up that fool, Govind, and bring him here.

N. N. Are you talking sense now? Why do you want Govind here at this time?

K. Please do as I say, dear.

(N. N. goes. Meanwhile three ruffians are shouting for Kamla. After three minutes N. N. and Govind return with a blank look).

K. (sternly looking at G.)

How long have you been living in this part of the city, Govind?

G. (scratching his head): Two years, madam.

K. Then tell me the honest truth. Who lived in this house and why did they leave it all of a sudden?

G. It was a woman of shady character, madam. The police were threatening her and the landlord persuaded her to clear out at once. What more shall I say? She was much sought after too.

K. Enough! What was her name?

G. Your own name, madam! Kamla!

(Sundar enters rubbing the sleep off his eyes.)

K. Now, Sundar, you were all praise for the intelligence of your brother-in-law in fixing such a nice house for us overnight and blaming me for my stupidity. Do you know who was residing here till this morning.

G. A woman of ill-fame by name Kamla, master!

N. N. Keep quiet, you block-head! First thing tomorrow morning I will have to ask the Assistant Manager to accommodate us for a month or so in his house. My God! the fellows are shouting louder.

(G. locks all the doors. The lights go off.)

ON the huge slab of stone under the peepul tree sat the two oldest men of the village—Tritandi and Yogishwar. They were chatterboxes who would daily dissect the private life of every villager and pronounce their verdict like a coroner. Indeed no reputation was safe. The younger men and women of the village tried to keep aloof from them but somehow their secrets were known to them and they soon became public property. The old men had always a band of admirers waiting on them.

"There goes Naresh, the prince of fools, in a cart," remarked Tritandi. "He is returning from his sister's house after three months. Is he not aware of the queer goings on in his own house?"

"What do you mean?" asked Yogishwar, as if he was quite ignorant.

"You rascal," retorted Tritandi. "You don't know how pretty is Shyamala, his wife. I am told you even became chummy with that flirt. Didn't you?"

BY

VIJAY RANGA

Yogishwar grinned, displaying his paan-stained teeth. "If you accuse me, Tritandi, of carrying on with that woman who else will not? Be careful, I say. Yes, I see a bullock-cart stopping in front of Shyamala's house. But how are you sure it is that fool of a husband? I

guess it must be Dharmarkar, her new lover."

"No fears. He always enters her house after nightfall. I will flay that fellow alive if he dares to enter her house in broad daylight. This village will not tolerate such unashamed debauchery," fumed Tritandi.

"I SHOULD think Naresh knows of his wife's wayward ways. But he is a meek timid fellow and connives at all this. Once when my own wife was talking familiarly to her cousin forty years ago, you know what I did?"

"Ha! What did you do, you idiot? With tail between your legs you must have quietly walked out of your house, I imagine," sneered Tritandi.

"You are an unimaginative ass, I tell you," remarked Yogishwar. "My wife was thinking that I was at the village fair. And I was quietly observing from the window. She was placing her right hand on her cousin's shoulder and giggling at him, when she suddenly noticed me. At one jump I entered the room, gave such a kick that it sent that rascal sprawling on the floor. And then I broke a pot containing curd on my wife's head, pushed her screaming into a room and locked her in for a whole day. Even now she is terribly afraid of me. Husbands must be like that."

At this time, a young man came rushing, panting for breath. "Here is news, grandpa," he said excitedly to Tritandi. "Naresh has come back to his house. He was suffering from fever and was stretched inside the bullock-cart that brought him. But a strange thing happened."

Both the old men were impatient. "Arvind, you are a fool to stammer and gibber like a monkey. Tell us clearly all the facts," urged Yogishwar. "If so, I will have you married to a comely girl in the next village. Remember, she has got money."

"Naresh was unable to get out because he couldn't sit up. So I knocked at the door and called for his wife. But the door was not bolted and I almost pushed it in. Whom did I see? Shyamala was sitting on Dharmarkar's lap and he was fondling her. She blushed furiously and jumped at my sight. Then I told her that her husband was lying in the cart, unable to get up. She adjusted her sari, whispered something to that fellow and then requested me to carry my husband in."

"NARESH was only semi-conscious. Dharmarkar and myself slowly lifted the ailing man and took him in. She had meanwhile prepared a bed on a cot inside the hall and after we desposited the patient on it she thanked me."

"This Arvind is an idiot," said Tritandi, laughing. "He could have demanded something more than thanks and that woman would have obliged. You see, her vital secret is in his hands now. It would be a first-class scandal if he begins to wag his tongue."

"As if Shyamala's affair is not known in the village? That shameless woman asks her lover to fetch her husband and all the neighbours are looking on," scoffed Yogishwar.

"Oh, grandpa!" interrupted Arvind. "She gave me a two-rupee note with a promise to help me whenever I am in want. And she asked me to keep my mouth shut. I said I would."

"Ho, ho, ho!" laughed the two men.

Poor Arvind looked baffled. His face was crimson with shame and he ran off as quickly as he came.

THE next day the doctor who examined Naresh took a serious view of his illness. It was paralysis of the left side of his body. The patient could not speak and could not move at all. But his fever had subsided. His mind was alert and no detail escaped his eyes. He perfectly understood what the

doctor said. He made all his gestures with his right hand which he could use.

OF course, Shyamala was very fussy and even wept bitter tears over her husband's sad condition. She invited the old women of the village and consulted them on any old effective remedy that could work. They too admired her devotion and gave her all sorts of advice. Even Naresh smiled at her. Dharmarkar came every night and sat with Naresh as if the patient were his friend. He it was who ran to the doctor thrice a week and got the mixtures and powders from him.

Naresh seemed to be very pleased with Dharmarkar's disinterested help. Arvind, too, called every day and became a close friend of Naresh and his wife. He ran on many little errands for them. He went to the fair once a week to buy for them all the provisions, vegetables and other things. He endeared himself to Shyamala and more so to the ailing husband. He often used to sit by him on many an afternoon and read to him inspiring puranic stories. There was a gleam of satisfaction in his eyes. Occasionally, however, Arvind noticed Naresh looking at his wife with a glint of hatred. But nothing came of it. The wife seemed to be very solicitous about him whenever there were visitors.

Dharmarkar came now even in daytime. He helped the patient in several ways. He changed his clothes and bed-sheets. He dipped towels in hot water and after rinsing them tight wiped his body clean. But much to Naresh's dislike, he seemed to have become part of the household. Sometimes he was invited by Shyamala to take his meal there. He began to stay in the house for long hours. Shyamala's face brightened up at his sight and she gaily chattered to him even in the presence of her husband.

TRITANDI and Yogishwar were apprised of these developments and they were greedy for more news of the brewing scandal. Arvind was called in every two hours to furnish them with all the information. Dharmarkar was making eyes at Shyamala. Arvind went inside the kitchen to ask for a cup of water. Oh, God! What did he see? Shyamala was tightly clasped in the fellow's arms and his mouth was upon every part of her body. They were so absorbed in each other that they did not see him watching. Then he coughed and they tore themselves away in panic. Dharmarkar almost pounced on him. "You fool!" she hissed. "Don't you dare touch him. He is like my little brother and I know him since he was a child." Saying so, she hugged Arvind and planted a kiss on Arvind's cheek.

The old men laughed over the wily woman's tactics. They

plied the young fellow with a thousand questions. What did it feel like when the woman threw her arms round his neck? What was her kiss like? "Like the soft petals of a rose pressed crushingly against my cheek," said Arvind, rubbing his cheek. "It is still burning and I don't know how to describe the feeling. You know, Grandpa, she did it on purpose to prevent me from exposing her folly and I thought there was promise in her eyes when she turned her smile on me."

"Hey, fool! Don't go to her house hereafter. She will snare you into her net. And then you will become as bad a man as Dharmarkar himself," warned Tritandi.

Yogishwar was silent for a minute. "I don't agree with you, Tritandi," he said. "Suppose we prevent him from going to her house, how will we be able to know of the goings on there? Better that this young man becomes her victim than some other rascal. Why should Dharmarkar alone...?"

"ENOUGH!" said Tritandi, holding up his hand. "Arvind, you are free to go to her house, and watch and report to us. But resist that woman's blandishments. She is trying to silence you with her cheap kisses. Better sit by the side of her husband and she will not dare to approach you."

—Please see page 29

DON'T NEGLECT HEADACHES

BY A PHYSICIAN

PRACTICALLY everyone has had a headache, at some time or other. There are few people, however, who think much about this common symptom, because it has usually passed off after a night's rest, or after taking one or two aspirin tablets and a cup of tea.

The majority of headaches, undoubtedly, are like this. That is to say, they are merely due to general tiredness, from mental or physical work. There are, on the other hand, many types of headache, from a wide variety of causes, which are of much greater significance. Although these are uncommon, when compared to the ordinary headache, it is very important to know something about them.

You should think of a headache as a sign of some internal

ailment or disorder, for which you should see a doctor if it keeps on recurring (even if you can relieve it with aspirin) or if the pain becomes very severe, or if there are other symptoms at the same time, such as nausea and vomiting, or difficulty with the eyesight. Headaches are often of more than ordinary importance, also, when they are felt only in one part of the head, like those of the disease known as "migraine," which usually affect only one side of the head.

Other Symptoms

A headache is often, especially in a child, one of the early signs of the onset of an illness, such as one of the infectious fevers, which produce a rise of temperature. The illness, in these cases, may be one of the ordinary ailments of childhood, such as measles or chicken-pox, but if it is very severe it might

indicate a more serious condition.

Eye-strain

A headache which mainly affects the forehead may be the result of eyestrain, even in people who do not experience any difficulty in reading. A reliable sight-testing optician will not prescribe glasses unless they are necessary, but would recommend examination by an ophthalmic surgeon in any doubtful case. Headaches due to eyestrain may be connected with a person's occupation if they do precision work such as instrument-making, or if they have to work with inadequate or unsuitable lighting.

There are other ways, also, in which frequent headaches might be connected with your occupation; e.g. if you work in a factory where you are in contact with fumes from chemicals, furnaces, or the exhaust pipes of engines. In such cases, the Works Medical Officer will be able to help you, and if the ailment is not connected with your occupation, you could then see your own doctor.

A headache is a symptom which you should always mention, if you suffer from it, when you ask the opinion of your

doctor about any ailment. It may be caused by so many things with which you might not think of connecting it, such as indigestion, kidney disease, disorders of the liver and gall-bladder, sinusitis, and diseases of the nose or ear.

There are also many diseases affecting the brain and other parts of the nervous system, such as tumours, which may give rise to headaches. These conditions may be slowly progressive, and may for a long time cause few symptoms other than headache, and possibly some muscular weakness which may be thought to be due to some other cause.

Don't Neglect

The majority of these diseases are rare, and they need specialised treatment, but they are mentioned here to show how important it is not to neglect a symptom. As has often been pointed out in these columns, there are many instances in which a case of serious disease could have been cured if the patient had asked for medical advice sufficiently early. This is especially so nowadays, since modern methods have made it possible to perform operations for the removal of tumours or for the relief of high blood pressure which would not have been possible at one time. †

Cecil DeMille :

Hollywood's Greatest Magician

"THE Ten Commandments" was the 70th film made under Mr. DeMille's personal direction, in a forty-four-year career stretching back to 1913's memorable "The Squaw Man" and paralleling closely the growth of Hollywood itself. In 1915 he made the spectacle "Carmen", starring the opera singer Geraldine Farrar. In 1918 he directed "Joan the Woman". It is still remembered for its panoramas of war scenes, the ritual-like dream effects, and a striking double exposure (Joan is in Charles VII's court pleading for soldiers to save France, while dim and shadowy figures of great knights in armour plunge over them all).

Included in the DeMille roster have been such epics as "The King of Kings"—made in 1927 and still being shown—"The Sign of the Cross," "Cleopatra,"

"The Crusades", and "The Greatest Show on Earth."

Critics may cavil about how much DeMille advanced cinema aesthetics. They may hoot at his flamboyance and such titillating devices as his recurrent bathtub scenes. But generally they concede that the DeMille productions have drawn an astronomically larger aggregate audience than the creations of any other individual in the industry. His showmanship down the years set the pattern for motion pictures at their most "colossal".

Taskmaster

Cecil B. DeMille, who died the other day, did not conform at all to the traditional, cigar-chewing, loudly caparisoned Hollywood producer. He was a cultivated and ultra-

conservative combination of dramatic impresario and businessman.

Combining the usually separate functions of producer and director DeMille used to work 12 to 14 hours a day, sleep five to eight hours a night, and field-marshal a corps of subordinates which, on his last production, numbered as many as 15,000 people at a time.

He earned a reputation as a demanding taskmaster. He was short with people who fell down on assignments or offered alibis: often he exasperated acting companies with long hours, belated lunch periods, and insistence that things be done over and over to his precise satisfaction.

He recently told a grumbling group of extras: "I don't mind if you don't like me—as long as you like yourself when you see yourself on the screen."

Loyal Assistants

But he was seldom accused of being capricious or illogical. He had a loyal cadre of assistants, headed by Henry Willcox, his associated producer, whose terms of service range up to the 40-year record of Anne Bauchens, his film editor, who is in her seventies.

On the set, DeMille wore the riding breeches and high boots that became a personal trademark, and was followed religiously by a "chair boy" with

a stool ready to put under him wherever he elected to sit down. But, indiosyncrasies, he explained, are utilitarian. The boots gave his legs support so he could stay on his feet far longer than he could in ordinary shoes. The stool saved energy and, flopped over with a padded side upward, served as a kneeling-point during his incessant study of camera angles through a viewfinder.

"The Ten Commandments," the story of Moses' life and the exodus from Egypt, was in preparation for more than three years. Historical research alone involved material from some 1,800 reference books and many documents on several continents. There were two months of location work in Egypt and the Holy Land, involving hordes of extras, menageries of camels and other animals, preceded by a year of building in Egypt sets towering more than 100 feet high, as well as a domestic shooting schedule of more than 100 days—double Hollywood's par for even a big production.

Most Lavish

Although famous as the exponent of the lavish, and as a builder of Hollywood stars, DeMille discounted both elements as reasons for the worldwide audiences his films attract.

"No spectacle can make a film successful," he used to insist. "No amount of casting

nor all the direction in the world. Only one thing—the story."

DeMille had rarely seen a camera when at a memorable luncheon in New York in 1912, he formed a partnership with Jesse Lasky and Samuel Goldwyn to make movies. But he had an exceptional dramatic background inherited and acquired.

His father, Henry C. DeMille, had been a collaborator with David Belasco, the Broadway producer. His mother ran a leading Broadway play agency. Cecil attended the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York. For ten years he toured the country as an actor and wrote plays. Ultimately he formed his own company.

In 1912, with film rights to "The Squaw Man" and a troupe headed by Dustin Farnum, DeMille entrained for Los Angeles, where a half-dozen other cinema pioneers were grinding cameras in the sunshine. "The Squaw Man" was shot in a rented stable.

A decade later, after the original triumvirate had gone their separate ways, DeMille was fired from Paramount for having the temerity to make Hollywood's first million-dollar picture. It was "The Ten Commandments," a modern story, however, with a Biblical prologue (which included a spectacular parting

of the Red Sea that was repeated in the new film).

Unique Touch

The million-dollar investment returned manifold, and Paramount quickly repented its precipitateness. But DeMille had set up his own studio operation. He spent eight years on this basis and as a producer at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer before finally moving his base back to Paramount.

Two of DeMille's early contributions to film-making were the introduction of realistically substantial sets instead of sleazy, painted canvas scenery, and the use of shadowed, "Rembrandt" lighting of individual players and settings in place of the flat, over-all scene lighting that had prevailed.

One of DeMille's more exceptional reputations of old age was a disinclination to pontificate about his field. While others bemoaned the state of the medium vis-a-vis television and other competition, he was content to concentrate on making movies. He rejected the role of soothsayer with the whimsical observation: "I believe I was one of those who said the horseless carriage wouldn't last."

"Good motion pictures are good entertainment and always will be," he said. "The methods of distribution may change, but drama doesn't."

He suggested 10 years ago that television might become a means of bringing films to theatres—a system engineers are pondering seriously today.

"But you are not going to wipe out theatres with home television or anything else," DeMille said. 'The Ten Commandments' on a fortysix-foot screen is quite a different thing from 'The Ten Commandments' on a fortysix-inch screen."

FAVOURITE OF MILLIONS

The "Radika" girl has now blossomed into a matured artist and plays the role of the 'nautch' girl in "Kalapani" with deep understanding and it is a compliment to Nalini Jayawant who played it.

Nalini Jayawant who made her debut in "Radhika" in her 13th year, directed by Virendra Desai, to whom goes the credit of introducing her to the screen, celebrated her 33rd birthday on 18th February 1959.

Mehboob's "Bahen" and Chaudary's "Aankhmichouli" brought fame to Nalini. She appeared in "Varasdhari" a Gujarati film, though she did not want to appear in a Gujarati film. This she had to do to make a comeback. She also appeared in one Marathi film and that was 'Nand Kishore.'

The year 1947 was an important year for, in that year she not

only made a successful comeback on the Hindi screen but also acted in some of the successful films which included "Anokha Pyar" and "Samadhi." The team of Ashok Kumar and Nalini proved popular in earlier days (Remember "Sangram," "Naubahar" and "Naaz"). Later the team of Ajit and Nalini proved popular. They co-starred together in Filmistan's "Nastik." Since then they have appeared in a number of films.

Nalini Jayawant is a near relation of Shobhana Samarth who hails from Maharashtra. There was opposition to her joining the films.

She came in contact with Virendra Desai, when she acted in "Radhika." The attachment between the director and the star grew more and more day by day and finally resulted in their marriage, in spite of the fact that it was opposed by both the families.

Besides this, Virendra was already a married man by the time he came in contact with Nalini.

Whether it was love or business considerations which made Virendra marry Nalini, it is difficult to say.

By the time she married she had completed her role in "Adabarz." For some time Nalini retired. It was during theos days that she had an operation and for four years after this she remained

behind the screen. She wanted to make a come-back which was not as easy as she thought.

The year 1954 saw the divorce of Nalini and Virendra Desai. The reasons furnished by Nalini for the divorce were that her husband was in love with another woman.

Nalini has become a good artist in these twenty years and her latest vehicle is Nav Ketan's "Kalapani."

May she have many more years of bright career.

LITTLE KNOWN FACTS

Shyama who made her debut in "Zeenat" climbed the ladder of stardom from an 'extra.'

The credit of introducing the playback singer Shamshad Begum in her 16th year, goes to Mehboob Khan.

FILM QUIZ

1. What is the real name of Jeevan?
2. Name the first film in which Guru Dutt acted.
3. Name the first Gevacolour film made in India.
4. Do you remember the first film produced by Raj Kapoor?

(Turn to page 29 for answers.)

Geetha Roy (Dutt) made her debut as a playback singer at the age of fourteen.

Actor-singer Manmohan Krishna is an M. Sc. He was for sometime a lecturer at Lahore.

Kedar Sharma's "Neel Kamal" introduced two stars—Raj Kapoor and Madhubala, then known as Baby Mumtaz.

BEHIND THE SCENES

It is stated that Nargis, the first lady of the Indian screen, is going to become a mother very soon.

Dilip Kumar who is the most eligible bachelor in filmdom is said to be a disappointed lover. The girl he loved left him alone. Dilip is of opinion that a boy can love a girl sincerely only once. Later love affairs are merely acted or artificial.

STARS AFTER RETIREMENT

The popular evergreen hero Ashok Kumar intends to write a book about Filmiland, for which he is collecting information and making notes, after retiring from the screen. Besides this he wants to pursue his hobby of painting and reading astrology intensively.

Mala Sinha, the young rising star, wishes to settle down in some hill station. She may retire soon after her marriage.

* * *

Waheeda Rehman, the up and coming star, intends to have a poultry farm soon after she ceases her connection with the film world.

* * *

Sheikh Mukhtar, the tallest star of the Hindi screen, whose "Do Ustad" is nearing completion has an idea of starting a restaurant after retirement and desires to name it as the 'Glutton's Inn.'

Here & There

Rajendra Kumar who made a very good impression in Anupama Chitra's "Talaq" is to be seen again in the concern's next film "Santana."

* * *

The newly formed Film Directors' Guild has elected Raj Kapoor as its president.

* * *

"Pather Panchali" ran for 21 weeks at New York and it is expected to open shortly at Washington also.

* * *

Premanath (Jr.) son of Premanath, will make his film debut in his father's film to be produced under the banner of P. N. Films.

It is learnt that Lata has been offered the role of a leading lady by Hrishikesh Mukherjee. Lata has not accepted it for she has already promised another producer to act in his film, if at all she makes up her mind to act.

MR. QARTOON, M. A.

Nataraja Productions have never seriously attempted at making a purposeful film. They have been very successful in making movies meant purely for the masses. If there are any morals in the pictures they evaporate long before we see 'the End' on the screen.

The story is about three Girls who come to Bombay in search of rich lovers. Once they actually come in contact they understand that it is not very easy to get rich husbands. As things would have it, the rich ones are crooks and the poor ones, the driver and the bearer of a hotel, get their sweethearts. This in short is the story of Mr. Qartoon, M. A.—M. A. referring to Master of Aloo (Potatoes), written by a Master of Arts. The story reminds one of the English film "How to marry a Millionaire."

Johnny Walker as Mr. Qartoon with his usual mannerisms pleases the pit. There is not much to do for Shyama, Sheila Vaz and Kumkum, the three damsels who are on hunt, except to giggle and do a bit of hip swinging. They have succeeded in this no doubt. Why did Shyama require glasses to look on? Maybe it is the fancy of the producers! Raj

Mehra as the crook and Mahmood just do well in their respective roles.

The technic: standards are uniformly good. Dances which include Rock 'n' Roll numbers are as the songs and they do not go above the usual standard.

There are many things that you are apt to question. Forget the why and be one with the masses whom it certainly entertains.

The only redeeming feature of the film is O. P. Nayyar's music. Some songs have already become popular.

* * *

Answers to Film Quiz :

1. Omkarnath Dhar Jevan Durga Prasad.
2. Baaz.
3. G.P. Sippy's 'Shahemshah.'
4. Aag.

—By N. Rajashekhar

The Affair

—Continued from page 20

"Oh, that is impossible," whined Arvind. "They are becoming bolder and more shameless. Only this afternoon Dharmarkar embraced Shyamala in the front room and Naresh was watching them but he pretended not to notice it at all."

The next morning the whole village was astir. Shyamala was found lying dead in a pool of blood by the side of her husband's cot. A sharp dagger was embedded firmly in her chest."

It was Arvind who let out the secret. He had bought a dagger at the fair for the use of Naresh who had made signs to him to get him one. And Naresh too was found dead. The shock of the recent events seemed to have proved too much. ‡‡

ANNIVERSARY NUMBER

Many readers in out-of-the-way places from all parts of India, which are not served by any news agents, send to us postage for copies of current and back numbers. Often we have to disappoint most of them, for we are left with no copies ourselves. Their applications are belated.

We would advise these friends and other readers also to enrol themselves as subscribers to make sure of their copies. If subscriptions (Rs. 4.50 nP. a year) are sent to us on or before 31st March, 1959, they are entitled to the supply of our April Anniversary Number, priced at one rupee. Readers can also advise us about despatch of subscription copies as birthday or other gifts to friends and relations.

LAUGHS FROM MANY LANDS!

MORE GUESTS!

An Aberdonian on a visit to a friend in London overstayed his welcome. It was getting toward Christmas and his host thought a kindly hint would have the desired result.

"Don't you think," he said, "that your wife and family will want you to be with them at Christmas?"

"Mon," replied the Aberdonian, "I believe you're right. It's rare thoughtful o' you. I'll send for them!"

* * *

REAL WORK

In Tokushima, Japan, the entire fire department—all 14 fire engines—went out to rural villages one day to demonstrate how to extinguish a fire.

A real fire started and gutted forty houses in the city before the engines could get back.

* * *

SO TRUE

The usual group of men, young and old, had gathered at their accustomed Saturday meeting place at the courthouse

square to discuss the weather, politics and other topics of perennial interest.

One of the "topics of perennial interest," a sweet young thing, happened to pass by, to the obvious interest of the group.

"I wonder," one of the young men pondered when the young lady passed, "how old a man is before he loses interest in women."

"Well," quavered a wrinkled old gentleman, "it must be past 84!"

* * *

AGES

At the age of 20 we don't care what the world thinks of us; at 30 we worry about what it is thinking of us; at 40 we discover that it wasn't thinking of us at all.

* * *

SUSPICION

An eminent specialist who devoted much of his time to charity work in clinics was surprised to have a bewhiskered old gentleman ushered into his consulting-room one day.

"Remember me, doctor?" asked the man. "You treated me over at the hospital. Well, I've been left a little money and I guess I can afford my own doctor now."

"But what made you come to me?" the physician wanted to know. "I wasn't the only doctor who treated you at the hospital."

"I know," the old man said quietly, "but you were the only one who helped me with my coat."

* * *

WORD FOR TWO WEEKS

An executive of a large advertising agency was sitting at his desk, frowning and drumming nervously with his fingers.

"Is there something bothering you, Mr. Smith?" asked his secretary.

"Yes," replied the man. "I've been trying to think of a certain word for two weeks."

"Well," suggested the secretary brightly, "how about 'fortnight'?"

* * *

DELICATE

Women drivers posed a problem even during the reign of Louis XV. It was fashionable in those days for a woman to drive her own carriage. In the narrow, crowded streets of

eighteenth-century Paris, this custom created perennial traffic jams.

The king directed d'Argenson, one of his ministers, to have it stopped. But d'Argenson hesitated. He stood to lose his post by issuing such an order, as many of the ladies had great power in court. The task required delicate handling.

With a master stroke of genius, he solved his dilemma by proclaiming the following ordinance: "Ladies under 30 years of age are forbidden to drive carriages."

* * *

HOW WONDERFUL

"Just look at this suit I'm wearing," Smithers raved to a friend. "The wool was grown in Australia, the cloth was woven in England, the thread comes from India, the suit was made in Canada, and I bought it here in the United States!"

"What's so remarkable about that?" asked the friend.

"Well," replied Smithers, "isn't it wonderful—so many people making a living out of something I haven't paid for yet?"

* * *

SPECIALIST

A specialist is a person who knows very much about very little and continues to learn

more and more about less and less, until eventually he knows practically everything about almost nothing at all.

* *

REACTION

The two golfers had reached the last green in the competition final and, as the excited on-lookers stood in hushed silence, the first player shaped up to putt.

Just as the putter blade was moving nicely toward the ball, a spectator sneezed violently. The unfortunate golfer started visibly and then struck the ball with a jerky and indeterminate jab. The ball hit the back of the cup, rose a good four inches into the air—and dropped into the hole.

When the applause died down, the second player advanced to his ball and addressed it amid a dead silence, then, turning his head, he cocked an eye hopefully in the direction of the miserable wretch who had sneezed.

"I wonder," said he politely, "could you possibly manage another sneeze?"

* *

PLAYING SCHOOLS

Eight-year-old Suzie was crazy about school, while her six-year sister was somewhat less enthusiastic.

"Let's play schools," suggested Suzie one day.

"All right," the younger one

agreed grudgingly, "but let's play I'm absent."

* *

MISTAKEN

A young candidate for a commission was being put through a general knowledge test by a Navy board.

"What kind of animals eat grass?" asked a member of the board.

The candidate fidgeted and stared out of the window, but said nothing. The question was repeated, but he still remained dumb.

"Surely," said one of the examiners kindly, "you can answer a simple question like that? I will repeat it, 'What kind of animals eat grass?'"

"Animals!" gasped the boy. "I thought you said 'admirals.'"

* *

REGRET

"Young man," said the angry father from the head of the stairs, "didn't I hear the clock strike four when you brought my daughter home?"

"You did," admitted the boy. "It was going to strike eleven, but I grabbed it and held the gong so it wouldn't disturb you."

The father muttered: "Well, I'm dashed! Why didn't I think of that in my day?"

SHORT STORY

The Bridegroom Was Missing!

By B. VICTOR

[Here is an absorbing story of the eternal triangle. Somebody had kidnapped the bridegroom and stopped the marriage. Was the bride's lover responsible?]

IT was a very bad day in summer. Though it was about eight o'clock in the morning, the sun did not appear in the sky. The thick clouds hid him completely behind them, and the drizzle portended a heavy storm.

But a more tempestuous storm was already raging in Miss Asha Devi's heart. That very morning she had heard from her two younger sisters that her father had promised her in marriage to Mr. Kumar and the wedding was to take place during the next week. This put her blood on fire and she hated her father for settling the marriage even without consulting her. Besides, he knew very well that she was in love with another man and

that invariably meant that she did not like Mr. Kumar.

Soon she found her thoughts flying away to her lover, Mr. Pratap. He was her next-door neighbour for several years and she fell in love with him when he was studying in his B.A. class. In fact, her parents secretly wished to marry her to him. They often invited him into the house for tea, praised his good qualities before her and even hinted to her that she should love him and marry him. Only a month back, after writing his B. A. Degree Examination, he had gone away to his native village.

But before his departure he came to her parents and plainly

asked for her hand and they were highly pleased and readily gave their consent. He then came to her and told her with great feeling that he would never forget her and that he would come soon to marry her. And she completely trusted him because she knew that he would never go back upon his promise.

BUT what would he do now? How would he feel when he had learnt that her parents had grossly deceived him and given her away to another man? What would he do? Would he simply keep quiet? Would he not come again to her father and beg for her? Or, would he not beg of her to run away with him secretly? Oh, she thought, he would certainly do anything and everything to get her for himself.

When she was thus day-dreaming her mother called her for breakfast. Slowly, like a sick woman, she rose from the chair in which she was sitting and walked to the dining room. When she entered it, her father and mother and her two younger sisters were already there for their breakfast. Between mouthfuls of food they were discussing her marriage in a cheerful mood. On seeing her at the door they all greeted her with their sweetest smiles. But she, feeling like a prisoner among enemies, went and sat at the table not for breakfast but for remonstrating with them.

"Well, darling," began her mother in a teasing voice, "how do you like Mr. Kumar?"

"I don't like him," said Miss Asha Devi in a weak voice.

"You don't like him!" exclaimed her father, shocked to his very bones while her mother dropped on the chair stunned. "Why don't you like him?"

"Because I hate him," was her simple answer.

"Why do you hate him?" asked her father, consternation writ large on his face. "I've settled your marriage with him."

"In spite of that I won't marry him," she said boldly.

Saying this she pushed aside her breakfast, stood up, ran away to her bed, tumbled down on it and gave herself up to sobbing and weeping.

IN a jiffy her parents were beside her bed. They asked, begged, forced and threatened her to tell them why she would not marry Mr. Kumar. But, however much they tried, they could not elicit or extract any reasons for refusal from her. On the contrary, the more they insisted upon knowing the reason, the more stubborn she became.

"Ah," cried the mother suddenly, "I know why she is refusing to marry him."

"Why?" asked her husband eagerly.

"Because she wants to marry Mr. Pratap," she said. "She is in secret love with him."

The realisation of this indisputable fact threw the elderly parents into their most violent tempers. The father, gritting his teeth most terribly, shook his walking-stick at her and gave her two or three good blows with it while her irate mother busied herself in boxing up her ears and pinching her cheeks with all the strength in her hands. However, after the first spell of anger was over, they desisted from doing such things because she, though their daughter, was almost the wife of Mr. Kumar.

Then they started reasoning with her and drummed into her ears that Mr. Kumar was a far better man than Mr. Pratap and that he was a big flourishing businessman and a thousand times richer than Mr. Pratap who was only fresh from college and without a job. Finally when it was about mid-day they left her alone, telling her definitely that under no circumstances would the marriage be cancelled or even postponed.

THUS left alone, Miss Asha Devi remained sobbing and weeping and wetting her pillow with tears until no more tears were left in her eyes. Then she sat upon the bed and began to think. She realised now that her parents would not relent

even if she had begged them a thousand times more; they were so hard-hearted, adamant and unshakable. In such a plight the only way of escape was to write to her Pratap to come immediately, explain the situation to him, and then beg him to save her from this great disaster. Accordingly she scribbled a hurried letter and gave it secretly to her trusted servant woman to post it "Express" that very day.

FOR the next two days she was as miserable as a devoted wife who had recently lost her husband. She ate only to live and lived only to weep and sob. Her days were dark and darker were her nights. But, on the third day afternoon, she suppressed her misery, changed her dress, combed her hair, assumed her normal expression, and unnoticed by anybody, slipped out of the house.

Soon she came to the Krishna Barrage and found her Pratap anxiously waiting for her at the entrance. Thank God, she muttered to herself; he had come there in response to her letter. On seeing his handsome person, her spirits had revived and banished misery from her heart. Quickly she walked up to him, devoured him with her hungry eyes, but could not say a single word to him; so great was her happiness on seeing him.

"Why, darling," Mr. Pratap asked, finding her dumb and

troubled. "What's the matter? What has happened?"

"I'll tell you," she said. "But first let us go on the Barrage."

IN a minute or two they came on the Barrage and found it full of people and vehicular traffic. On both the footpaths there were hundreds of idlers, loafers, fashionable women, gentlemen, convalescents, thieves, pick-pockets, beggars, hawkers, lovers, men, women and children of all descriptions and of all ages who were tremendously enjoying the newly constructed glorious, massive work of our engineers. Yet, finding it the very place for a private talk because every pedestrian was busy in his own way and in no way curious to overhear, they started the conversation.

"Yes, my darling," again asked Mr. Pratap, walking beside her, "what has happened? Tell me at once."

Miss Asha Devi, not knowing how to break the news to him, struggled internally for a few seconds.

"Oh," she said at last, brushing away the tears which gushed into her eyes. "Oh, we are ruined. My father has arranged my marriage with another man."

"Why?" asked Mr. Pratap with a troubled face. "How

can he do that when he has promised you to me?"

"I don't know," she said. "He's changed his mind now. He thinks that man is better than you."

"Is it all arranged?" he asked her.

"Yes," she said, "and the wedding is coming off in the next week."

"Then what's to be done? What shall we do now?"

"Nothing," she said, "except to go to Father together and beg him to cancel my marriage with that man."

"I will never do that," he cried in anger. "No, I will never go again to your father! He has deceived me."

AT this point-blank refusal which was never anticipated by her, Miss Asha Devi felt shivers passing down her spine and she trembled like an old woman exposed to biting cold in winter.

"Ah, darling," ejaculated Mr. Pratap. "Who's that man? What's his name? Where does he live? Tell me all about him and I'll go to him to disclose our love for each other and request him not to marry you. Perhaps he does not know about our love."

"You should not do that,"

she said quickly. "There's no use of it."

"Why?" he demanded.

"Because," she said, "he is the most unscrupulous rogue in all the world. Besides, he is most lewd and treacherous."

"My dear Pratap," she continued, finding him dumb with confusion, "to tell you the truth, he came to my father yesterday to discuss some arrangements for the marriage. And when I was alone he suddenly came into my room like a thief and most shamelessly wanted to take some indecent liberties with my body."

"The rogue!" cried Mr. Pratap unable to control his exasperation.

"And," she resumed quickly, "when I refused compliance and avoided him as if he was a plague, he insisted upon knowing the reason. Then I plainly told him that I did not like to marry him and that I hated him with all my heart."

"Then what did he do?" asked Mr. Pratap anxiously.

"Nothing," she said. "He did not stop his monkey-tricks. He still continued to harass me."

"THEN why did you not give him a slap?" he asked her, fuming with rage.

"I was about to give him one,"

she said. "But just then my servant woman came into the room suddenly and surprised us. And, my dear, I cannot tell you how he glared and glowered at her for the intrusion. But my servant woman begged him to excuse her, saying that she never knew he was there. But I'm sure she came on purpose to stop him from making advances to me. That good woman then took him aside and whispered to him in a confidential tone that I was terribly in love with you, thinking that would effectively silence him and stop him from marrying me. But that rogue, instead of being ashamed, became furious, and swearing like a devil bawled out at me that he would marry me at any cost and that he would suck your blood if you tried to stand in his way."

"THE blighter," cried Mr. Pratap, fuming with more rage than ever. "Where does he live?"

"Why? I won't tell you," she said quickly, trying to calm him. "If I do, you may go to fight him. And it's very dangerous. He can easily kill you."

"Not that, my dear," he said artfully, "It's always better to know one's enemies—and where they live—either to avoid them or to fight them. It's always safe."

Now Miss Asha Devi hesitated a moment, thought he was right,

and then told him where his rival lived and described him pretty well to Mr. Pratap.

"Let me go now, my darling," he said to her as soon as she finished the description.

"Let you go! Where?" she exclaimed in horror.

"To see Mr. Kumar."

"Why? Why do you want to see him?" she asked, trembling from head to foot.

"To tell him not to stand in my way," was his simple reply.

Miss Asha Devi now realised her folly in telling him the whereabouts of his enemy. For a few moments she remained speechless in utter bewilderment.

"Oh, my dear Pratap," she wailed, please don't go to him—please don't do that. Don't quarrel with him—don't fight. You are no match for him. He's ten times stronger than you are and more cruel than a beast of prey. He can easily kill you. You cannot escape from the hands of that fiend if you go there."

"I shall find it out," he said undaunted.

Now there was no use in arguing with him. From his very mouth, his eyes, his tone, it was

evident that he was determined to go and fight him and she trembled at the mere thought of the bloody fight that was going to take place on account of her. She must immediately do something to stop this fight from taking place by stopping Mr. Pratap from going into the arena. But how?

UNFORTUNATELY there was only one thing that she could do now. That was to offer herself to run away with him right then. Perhaps, she thought, he was even forcing her indirectly to do that.

"No, my dear Pratap," she said, making up her mind to take this dangerous step, "no, you need not go and fight him. Why so much ado about this when I'm ready to go with you right now?"

"Where? What do you mean?" he asked her, surprised very much.

"Wherever you take me."

He stood stunned.

"Yes, dear, yes," she begged, "I will go with you right now—wherever you take me. I can't let you go to that rogue and get yourself killed by him. No, Pratap, no. It's quite useless. You cannot fight him. Leave that idea and let us go away."

"No, I can never run away with you," he growled emphatically.

Poor Miss Asha Devi! She trembled like a leaf in the wind when he said so. She thought that he would jump at the offer and carry her away in triumph to some nook of the world where they could be free from all troubles and live like two happy birds.

"WHY, Pratap," she asked at last, her eyes full of tears; "why can't you take me with you? Don't you love me?"

"I do love you and I do want to marry you," he said, "yet I cannot run away with you."

"Why?"

"Because it is not right," he said. "My dear," he continued, "you are very foolish to ask me to do such a thing. Don't you know, my dear, what will happen if we run away like this?"

"What?" she asked, beginning to doubt that he had no real love for her.

"Then listen," he said. "If we run away like this our lives will be ruined. Wherever we go people will look at us curiously and whisper maledictions behind our back. They will try to shun our company. Perhaps they might even excommunicate us as rebels against society and religion. As a result of all this we can never live happily."

"Not only that, my darling," he went on sermonising, finding

her dumb. "If we do this, your parents also lose their respect in decent society. Your sisters cannot get married easily. Perhaps they may also be excommunicated like us. And, as a consequence of all this your father may die of grief and his family may be ruined. I love them all as much as I love you. I cannot do this at least for their sake."

Just then, before they were aware, a car stopped beside them and they were surrounded by Miss Asha Devi's father and his servants who came in search of her. The servants gripped Mr. Pratap and held him tight while Miss Asha Devi's father dragged her by the arm and threw her on to a seat in the car. Then casting piercing glances at Mr. Pratap and hurling at him a thousand curses, they drove away.

For the next few days Miss Asha Devi was jailed in her own house and was totally neglected by everybody. They were all too busy with the arrangements for the wedding.

At last the fateful wedding day itself came with a bright sun and a clear blue sky. The house and the newly erected pandal were magnificently decorated with colourful festoons, mango twigs, plantain trees etc., and were filled with innumerable relatives and guests who poured in from all places in their gayest moods. To add to these,

there were numerous children, romping and frolicking, chasing one another, playing hide-and-seek, jumping like frogs and making a hell of a noise as if they were devils bent on mischief.

Now, it was drawing on to 7 a.m. and the auspicious hour was very close. The priests had already arrived and were impatient to chant their mantras. Miss Asha Devi, bathed and arrayed in the traditional style of a bride, was fortifying her mind to swallow poison and end her life, while all others were eagerly awaiting the arrival of the bridegroom's party.

They waited and waited but there was no sign of its coming. At last a messenger had arrived with a funereal look and broke the news that the bridegroom was missing from the day before and the wedding should be postponed till he was found. At this horrible news everybody's face went as white as a sheet of paper. Some said he had met with a car accident on the road, some said he was robbed and murdered and others said he had run away with some other girl. But nobody was sure who was right.

It was on the next day that most of the relatives and guests had departed. Only a few important relatives had remained in the house to console the broken-hearted, grief-stricken parents of the bride. Suddenly when it was about 10 a.m. there came a loud knock on the gate

and a servant ran and opened it to admit a Sub-Inspector of Police and a constable. At the sight of these two people, everybody was gingered up into activity and came to the verandah.

"What's the matter, sir?" mumbled the bride's father, giving a chair to the police officer. "Have you found out Mr. Kumar?"

"Yes," said the Sub-Inspector, sitting in the chair and stealing a glance at Miss Asha Devi.

"Where's he then?" cried the old man, all fluttering with excitement.

"In the lock-up," was the police officer's simple reply.

"In the lock-up!" shrieked a dozen men simultaneously in a loud chorus. All of them were scared stiff.

"YES, in the lock-up," repeated the Sub-Inspector to beat every one out of his wits.

"Why, sir," an uncle of the bride asked now. "Why is he in the lock-up? What did he do? Please tell us plainly."

"Then listen," said the Sub-Inspector.

"You know Mr. Pratap?"

"Yes, we know him," said the bride's father. "But what has

he to do with this?"

"He was in love with your daughter," the Sub-Inspector continued, "and wanted to marry her. So he went to Mr. Kumar to——."

"Oh, my Pratap!" wailed Miss Asha Devi suddenly interrupting the police officer in the middle of his speech. She was trembling from head to foot.

The Sub-Inspector immediately understood the meaning of her wail. She evidently thought that her Pratap was killed by Kumar and that was why he was kept in the lock-up.

"Not that, Miss," he assured her quickly. "Your Pratap is all right."

"What's all this nonsense?" cried one of the relatives, a young cousin of the bride. "Sir, please tell us clearly what has happened."

"He," continued the Sub-Inspector, "I mean Mr. Pratap, instead of running away with Miss Asha Devi as most lovers do in such circumstances, had kidnapped Mr. Kumar to stop him from marrying her."

"He kidnapped Kumar! The rogue! I will break his neck," cried the bride's father.

The blighter! I will kill like a dog," cried an uncle.

"The scoundrel! I will break every bone in his body," cried the cousin.

"He," continued the Sub-Inspector when they had spoken, "simply knocked down Mr. Kumar on the road, bound him hand and foot, carried him away to his house and locked him up in a room. But today early in the morning he came to the Police Station and confessed to us what he had done and surrendered himself. Immediately we rushed to his house to free Mr. Kumar. But when we went there, to our great surprise, we found Mr. Kumar to be the very person for whom the police have been diligently searching."

"Why? What has he done?" cried one of them while all others stood in dumb surprise and fear.

"He has done enough things to hang him," said the police officer severely. "Posing himself as a prosperous businessman, he had deceived hundreds of merchants in Madras and disappeared with their goods and money. In short he is a notorious swindler and impostor."

"But where's Mr. Pratap, sir?" asked Miss Asha Devi, her lips quivering while all others stood wonder-struck and stunned. "Is he also in the lock-up?"

—Please see page 44

ON THE HOME FRONT

By DAS

FEED a guest and then feed yourself, say the Shastras. It is an ideal principle that deserves full support. But, alas! the times are such and the plight of the middle-class folk is such that guests are an unwanted burden. Some would even go to the extent of calling them a nuisance but I, for one, don't agree.

Take my own case, for instance. I am the father of five children and passing rich on Rs. 250 a month. My wife wants a sari or a blouse once a month, a fancy jewel once in six months, frocks for the little girls and a smart western outfit for my boy, Shyam. Twice a month, two of my children develop cold or cough or both, plus fever, and the last one has whooping-cough through six months at a stretch. The doctor gets two-fifths of my pay every month, the cloth-dealer and the

tailor one-fourth, the Multani one-third, the landlord one-sixth (for three small rooms), the milkman one-fifth, the provisionwallah one-third, the bus conductor one-tenth, the bunk fellow one-ninth for my cigarettes, the hotel proprietor one-eleventh for my coffee.

Well, if you calculate it all and add up my children's school fees, rickshaw fare, my wife's unnecessary toilet purchases, you will find that I am over-spending my income. My debts total up to a hundred rupees a month. You wonder how I manage it all. But that is a secret that I don't propose to share with anyone! In the circumstances, you will agree, I don't want guests. But how can I avoid them? My brother in Delhi sends a young colleague of his with a letter of introduction and exhorts me to take every possible care of him. Sethna he calls

himself and fills half the front room with his trunks and beddings. Bugs march from them like members of the National Cadet Corps up and down, giving us the creeps.

openly in disapproval at the tobacco-filled air in the house and actually making faces at him. Who do you think they were? One was Sharda, my wife's sister, and the other was Naga, my own sister.

On the top of the luggage sits this Sethna, smoking cigar after cigar and sending up clouds of acrid smoke that fill our lungs to suffocating point but how can I offend against the feelings of the honoured guest? He does not know our language and I don't know his. Anyhow, wild gestures on our part make understanding a bit easier. He doesn't go out at all. He rolls out his bed after eating ten chappathis, two plates of potatoes and five cups of curd. He goes on belching and smoking by turns and goes to sleep with a cigar glowing between his lips. My wife warns me to keep watching that burning cigar lest some sparks should set fire to his luggage and all our goods. "The telephone number of the fire ambulance is O," she whispers. Not until eleven o'clock would the cigar go out. I go about the bed of our guest five times to satisfy myself that there is no danger from his fire and then retire to bed. For a whole week he stayed put. Only when he saw two middle-aged orthodox dames who came in as new guests did he suggest to me that I could as well show him some cheap hotel to which he could move. He would not have minded the new guests but for the fact that they came in like ferocious dogs, sniffing

And what a hell these two women raised! We were not informed of their arrival. And each thought that the other would not be there. For just three days they held their tongues and observed a truce. Sharda demanded her tribute from my wife; she wanted priority of attention. My sister grouched that she couldn't find some mental peace even in the house of her own younger brother whom she had brought up from his cradle, our mother having departed earlier. But what actually did she find? The sisters were real cats; talking behind her back and even putting out their tongues at my sister. The children, too, took sides with their mother. How could she stay in that house a minute longer? To see her weeping turned my heart inside out, and I flew into a vicious temper when my wife came in to offer some explanation and pacify my sister. Just to show that I was still a man of authority I slapped my wife and asked her what was the meaning of all this. Having laid hands on her, I at once realised my folly and myself melted into tears.

That night on returning from office, I found the house locked. My wife with our children and my sister-in-law left for their mother's home. Of course, my sister, too, had gone back to her home, smelling some trouble.

For six months my wife left me in the lurch. You probably think that I could have saved a lot and cleared my debts. I thought so, too. But how many trips I undertook to my wife's place, spending fifty rupees on each! And my children had to study for another year in the same class. I took two months' sick leave and two more months on half pay to spend the time with my wife and had to go on bended knees to make her come back. And when we all returned life became more complicated and money was more elusive than ever. The result: I always keep an open door for all

guests, invited or uninvited, on my wife's side or mine. Once bitten twice shy, you see! ‡

The Bridegroom Was Missing !

—Continued from page 41

"Oh, I'm sorry, Miss," apologised the Sub-Inspector quickly. "He is free. He is at the gate outside now."

"At the gate!" cried all, along with Miss Asha Devi and ran to the gate to whine their apologies and to bring him in with a warm welcome.

A week later Miss Asha Devi and Mr. Pratap were married with great pomp and magnificence with thousands of people praising Mr. Pratap for his gallantry and valour. ‡‡

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

*I slept and dreamed that life was beauty.
I woke—and found that life was duty;
Was my dream, then, a shadowy lie?
Toil on, said heart, courageously.
Aad thou shalt find thy dream shali be
A noonday light and truth to thee.*

—ELLEN STRUGIS HOOPER.

WOMEN'S CORNER

MARRIAGE AND MOTHERHOOD

By DEVIKA

MANY educated young women and career girls are often pathetically at a loss as to how to adjust their lives and temperaments after their marriage. It is not their inability to adapt themselves but lack of proper guidance and advice is the root-cause of most of their difficulties. In the case of girls who do not go to school and marry very young, there are elderly women and grandmas who drill them for years and equip them with knowledge of the trials awaiting them in marriage and motherhood. But girls who go to college or train themselves for some career are too busy to think of matrimony. They gather scrappy ideas from story-books and novels about marriage and dream of some glorious romance in which they will be the chief centre of attraction. It is sad to have to record that most young women wake up rather late and stumble upon many hurdles. Their freedom

when they were studying in colleges or when they were economically independent is considerably restricted. I won't say "curbed" because even when the husband happens to be most devoted and lenient, a woman's duties as a wife and a mother are taxing and take up a lot of her time and attention.

CONTRIBUTIONS

We invite our women readers to contribute to this section on fashions, beauty notes and other problems relating to them.

She will find that she cannot keep up her correspondence with all her friends. Every month there will be quite a heap of letters that have yet to be answered. She cannot go to pictures for more than twice a week. She will not be able to

attend all the functions and parties to which she has been invited. Sometimes the Old Schoolgirls' Day and the Old College Girls' Day may have to be given the go-by.

And, then, when she becomes a mother she will herself voluntarily restrict her liberty. Every young woman on the threshold of life would do well to understand that marriage and motherhood, though wonderful in themselves, usher in a period of psychological and biological changes. These terms need not frighten her in the least. Let her, for instance, think of a tree that is full of fragrant blossom and delicious fruit. Motherhood and the maturity of years will impart to a woman a greater attraction, dignity and grace. The children will shed light and sweetness on the home and will more than amply compensate the mother for the loss of her early privileges.

The young mother when she comes back to her husband's home with her first-born has some secret dreads which she must learn to dismiss as most silly and baseless. She is apt to imagine that she has lost all her good looks after her pregnancy and that she has most definitely become ugly after the arrival of her first child. She fears that her husband will be repulsed at her very sight and is probably thinking that he has transferred his affection to some other girl in his absence.

Actually the husband is dying to see his wife who is in her parents' home and wants to fondle his beloved child. There is an increasing warmth in his heart which radiates towards his wife and child and he is eager to welcome them at the earliest possible date.

Of course, in some cases, the husband, if he is not very broad-minded or if he is a selfish brute may tend to grow jealous of the child which is monopolising the mother's attention and will snarl and snap at his wife on the flimsiest pretext. Such men are stupid and ignorant and harm their own interests by displaying such a petty outlook. They do not know that a baby, if it is to have healthy, normal growth has to be cuddled and breast-fed by its mother as frequently as possible. It is often unconsciously crying for warmth and protection against the dark sinister forces of the world and who else but the mother can afford them? The husband, instead of encouraging the wife to pay all possible attention to the new-born, rages and storms when his needs are overlooked or when he imagines that he has been neglected. This is the most absurd position for him to take up. Instead of feeling proud that his own flesh and blood is being taken care of by his wife, instead of assisting her in the household work he insults the poor woman and growls at her like a wild beast of prey. The upshot of it all is some

serious misunderstanding and even estrangement for a while.

It is up to the educated wife to guard against these dangers and when she is actually confronted with such awkward situations, she must gently place these facts before her spouse and ask him to face up to them in the interests of his own child. He does of course love his child but the springs of his love and devotion are latent and the wife has only to tap them.

Unless there is some elderly woman to take charge of the baby, it is unwise of the mother to leave it at home and go on a short visit. Even the husband is not to be entrusted with the custody of the child for more than an hour. Some women are crazy enough to lock their children in and rush to a friend's house or see a picture.

The accidents to children in such a case are too many and indescribably dangerous. The baby may kick up its arms and legs and get entangled or even muffled in its clothes to the point of suffocation and even death. Or it will crawl out of the cradle and fall down and injure itself.

And there are some mothers who thirst for the freedom that they enjoyed as career girls. The husbands are at times tempted by the prospect of adding to their income and permit their spouses to have their way. With the mother working away in the office, the child, however well looked after, will wilt away like a flower. Starved of its quota of affection from the mother, it will have anything but normal growth. The danger signal is plain for all to see. ‡‡

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SHORT STORY

DEBT TO PAY

By R. SUNDARA RAJU

HE was a gaunt old man—an octogenarian. He must have been a remarkable person in his young days. He was nearly six feet tall with broad shoulders, an angular face and aquiline nose. There were only the remains of a glory which belonged to the past and they were impressive enough.

His wrinkled face bore evidence of hard days faced bravely.

interview. His widowed daughter, Savithri, had cautioned me against telling the truth about Ram to the old man. She had guessed before I told her that her brother must have died on the way to India. She was now anxious to save her father from a fatal shock and implored me to assure him that his son would be coming in a few months.

In her anxiety not to disturb

+++++
The two friends were evacuees from Burma after the Japanese bombing of Mandalay. One was dying on the way but he had a burden on his conscience...
+++++

+++++
The glint in his sunken eyes showed a steadfast hope which the old heart was hugging.

When I announced myself as one coming from Burma, a cloud passed over his face and in a tremulous voice choked with anxiety, he asked feebly, "Do you know my son, Ram?"

I was fully prepared for the

her father, she came quite close to me and almost whispered into my ear, "It is terrible news you are bringing, sir. My father took to bed on the day he heard of the bombing in Burma and has not left it since then. Still there is a flickering hope in him that Ram would come back. Oh! my poor father..." She began sobbing. I felt troubled in soul that I should be the un-

fortunate person to lose Ram on the way, bring the heart-breaking news to this beautiful girl and witness her misery as well. Somehow I felt a terrible concern for her on seeing her and her plight. Not wishing to betray my feelings, I wiped my face and assuring her that I would put more hope into her father, stepped up to the bedside of the invalid.

I LEARNT that he was very sensitive about a debt he had to pay—a thousand rupees to one of his relatives. His lands, even when his son remained with him and laboured, yielded barely enough to feed the three souls the year through. The debt was incurred during the period of famine for three continuous years. There was no hope at all of repaying the debt unless Ram got employed somewhere. The example of some young men induced Ram to try his luck in Burma. The old man thought over it for days and finally decided that some sacrifice must be made to save his honour and that of the family.

That was how Ram went to Burma in 1938. Two years later came the Japanese invasion. All of us felt trapped. The Japanese who had learnt the blitzkrieg method from the Germans threatened to wipe out some of the important cities from the map of Burma. We were afraid to stir out and afraid to remain in our homes. Then came the merciful announcement that Indians could evacuate

the big cities in twenty-four hours without the danger of being bombed. Such of us as were employed in Mandalay started in desperate hurry and actually ran out of the city.

Ram was a salesman in the next cloth store and I had known him for a few months. Distress made us closer than blood brothers. Along with five hundred others, we left Mandalay and started on our epic march across Upper Burma with the intention of crossing Assam and coming to Calcutta, via Manipur.

By the time we crossed a hundred miles, we had formed an army of two thousand odd evacuees. It was a harrowing experience we had, those two months, walking across the mountains and forests of Upper Burma. As the days passed, we came across newer and newer faces of suffering humanity, men, women and children, of all ages. It seemed that there was a long and never-ending caravan from Rangoon right up to Calcutta. Of the party which started from Rangoon on that fateful night, numbering about five hundred, only a handful kept pace with us. Perhaps a few went in advance and some lagged behind, and many went down the valley of death.

IN the camps on the way, we saw sights which Florence Nightingale might not have witnessed at Scutari. Malaria,

in all its stages, tortured people and took quite a toll of lives. Ram and I reached Manipur, half dead and we were forced to halt there for three days. Our legs were swollen and feet were bleeding. We learnt that the Manipur Government would not allow us to proceed, even if we had wanted to. They insisted on inoculating all the evacuees against cholera and forcing them to rest for a day or two there.

THE day we reached Manipur, we had some rest and the next day, we were inoculated. That night Ram felt unwell. When he was about to be removed to the isolation shed, he gave me a packet containing one thousand two hundred rupees and his father's address. He had no hope of surviving the attack and desired me to hand the amount to his father who had sent him to Burma only to earn that amount and who would have no peace, either in this world or the next, if the debt was not paid. Ram had even come to think that his chief debt to his father was to enable him to pay off the loan.

I was unwilling to take the amount from him and thus prepare myself to bid farewell to my friend. But when he was being removed to the isolation shed, there was no alternative. As I took the amount from him, he gripped my hand tightly and drawing me nearer to him, said with tears in his eyes, "Raj, when this debt is paid my father's

honour will be saved and he will be happy. But I have another debt of which I cannot clear myself so easily." Here he stopped for breath, wiped his eyes, and continued, gasping and uttering not more than two or three words at a time. "There is Savithri, my sister, who is barely twenty-two and widowed the month after her wedding. It was plague which killed her husband. When I am gone, what will happen to her?... Who will protect her?" His tears scalded my hands and my own eyes dimmed with tears. I felt indescribably uncomfortable. How could a young man like me and a bachelor at that, offer to be the guardian of a widowed girl? I tried to comfort him, but my words sounded hollow in my own ears.

That night I could not have a wink of sleep. Visions of my return home alone, the old man on his deathbed and the lovely young woman haunted me. The next morning, I made anxious enquiries and looked at the casualty board, only to find that my friend had left me and the world in the early hours of the dawn. I suffered all kinds of hallucinations and for sheer fear of death, wrenched myself from there by midday...

It was to discharge my duty to my beloved Ram that I started for Alangudi to meet his father. When the venerable old man questioned me, I was fully alert and answered with as much

cheer as I could put into my voice. "Oh, yes. He is a good friend of mine and we worked in adjacent stores. I had an urgent call from home and came by plane, only yesterday."

"By plane! They say Mandalay was heavily bombed..." His voice was now more tremulous and weaker.

"That is all over now and by God's grace, Ram and I escaped. Now, Sir, Ram may be coming here shortly. But because he had about a thousand rupees ready with him when I started, he sent it through me, saying that you have a debt to pay off."

His eyes sparkled for a fleeting second or so and he held out his shaking hand. I could hear his loud breathing. When I handed him the packet, I perceived my hand trembling. He got the packet, ran his hand fondly over it once and beckoning to Savithri who was standing near and said, "Take this immediately to the Mittadar's wife, settle the account and get back the bond." There was a ring of cheer in his hollow voice.

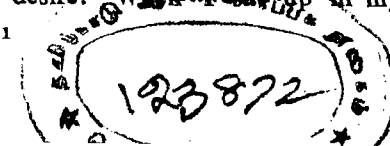
When Savithri was gone, the old man summoned me to his bedside and whispered, "I am very happy now, my son, though my old eyes long to see Ram." After a spell, he continued in a reflective and rather melancholy tone, "I have one more responsibility yet. Ram might

have told you of our Savithri. I wish he comes soon so that I may die peacefully leaving her to his good care."

TEARS choked my voice at the words of hope expressed by him regarding Ram's return. I was too much touched to dissemble any more and therefore kept silent. He was speaking again, though feebly. "Now, my young friend, would you pay heed to the request of a dying man? Would you kindly stay in my humble cottage for the night? Your presence here for sometime will comfort my heart." Somehow I felt that as Ram's friend, I should remain with his people for a day or two and readily agreed.

Savithri served me food, after attending to her father. As I observed her grace of movement, I could not reconcile myself to her widowhood, wasting her sweetness on the austere widow's bed. When she handed me a glass of drinking water, I could see her charming face very closely. Perceiving my stare, she blushed and quickly cast her eyes down.

I could not sleep peacefully that night. I was dreaming of Ramu and Savithri. Some time before dawn, I dreamt that Ram brought Savithri close to me and placed her hand in mine. I awoke with a start. It appeared to me that it was not a dream but the reflection of Ram's desire. When I sat up in my



bed, I felt that I was not alone in that room and that my friend's spirit was hovering about the place. Willingly getting into that suggestion, I muttered, "Well, Ram, this is my debt to you and I promise to pay it. I shall not merely protect Savithri, but renew her life."

In the morning, I found the old man looking weaker and more haggard. Probably, thoughts about Ram kept him awake. Or, was it anxiety about Savithri? If it was the latter, I could relieve him immediately. So I knelt at his bedside and said, "Sir, I know all about Savithri and your concern for her. Would you be good enough to give her in marriage to me?"

My proposal seemed to give

him a shock of surprise. He blinked vacantly, then winked nervously and could not get a word to his lips. Words appeared to gurgle in his throat. Finally he drew me towards himself and hugged me. There were tears in his eyes. He asked me to summon Savithri. When she came, he took her hand and placed it in mine and whispered, "May God bless you!" Then he placed our hands on his chest, closing his eyes and mumbling something. It was clear that he had no physical strength to bear the shock of happiness. Holding our hands, he swayed against the pillow gently. Slowly, his grip slackened and his head sagged forward. The dear old man had paid his debt! ‡‡

THINGS THEY SAY

All successful individuals have become such by hard work ; by improving moments before they pass into hours that other people may occupy in the pursuit of pleasure.—MARY BAKER EDDY.

The man who does not work for the love of work, but only for money is not likely to make money nor to find much fun in life.

—CHARLES M. SCHWAB.

Folks who never do any more than they get paid for, never get paid for any more than they do.

—ELBERT HUBBARD.

The Girl Who Strayed

By MRINAL PATNAIK

[Her story was amazing but there was the ring of truth in it...]

IT was a hot, sweltering day. My friend Gopal and myself were the only members of the Social Service Team who remained behind to complete the survey of the beggar population in the city. The other members got tired and left. "Enough material for two volumes," they said and left for their homes. But Gopal and myself were not satisfied with the human aspect of the survey and went on roaming along the platforms of the city.

At our sight the beggars disappeared even as dogs mysteriously vanish at the approach of the dog-catching van. Wearily we sat down on the stone steps of a big office building which had been closed early in the afternoon, that being a Saturday. Just then the sea breeze set in and the heat on our brows

was slowly taken off.

"Hey, look at your left," whispered Gopal.

Though it was growing dark I could still clearly see about me. There was light enough from the neighbouring shops. I turned round and was startled to discover a woman crouching low in the small arch under the stone steps. She was fumbling for some pot and tin and muttering to herself. What she said I could not follow. Probably it was some ditty which she remembered but her throat was hoarse and the song, if it was one, sounded rather grotesquely.

I held up my hand to Gopal to indicate that here probably was material for an excellent

story with a human touch and that we could beat the other members of the Survey Team with a scoop. Gopal was agreeable and nodded to me to go ahead.

I COUGHED a little and the woman was frightened like some mouse at the noise of a cat. "Is that you, Bangara?" she asked, stretching out her hands.

Then it struck me like a flash of lightning. The woman was blind.

"It is only a tired traveller, oh woman," I said as kindly as possible. "What are you doing here?"

Her face brightened. "In that case, master, will you take pity on a starving beggar and give me some food to eat? I am blind, you see, and if you give me some paise or annas I will have to wait till my man comes! I thought you were Bangara and that was why I accosted you so."

"All right, myself and my friend here will get you good food and even money on one condition," I stipulated, with a smile.

She was eager and almost touched my arm.

"Well, what is that, master? Anything I will do to satisfy my hunger," she answered excitedly.

"The story of your life. You must tell it to us without exaggeration. If you tell me that, you can eat a good meal and sleep in peace to-night. In addition I will give you a rupee. But no lies, woman, just to please me. Tell us what you know," I coaxed.

"All right, sir," she said, tears coursing down her cheeks. "You are the first friend and benefactor to whom I am opening my mouth after twenty years. But the restaurant is a bit far. When will you go?"

"Don't be anxious. My friend here will go to that hotel to take something for himself and when he comes back he will get you two big packets of food enough to last you until tomorrow noon. And I shall pay you that rupee now itself. Here, take it."

SHE eagerly clutched at the coin with trembling hands and tied it in the folds of her ragged sari. Meanwhile, Gopal got down the steps and I asked him to have a drink and smoke and come back with some good stuff for the woman. As she sat on the stone step below my feet I had a good look at her. There was a slight trace of beauty in her face which was marred by her blindness. Her body was thin and bony and her hands must once have been very slender and shapely.

After a few minutes' silence she spoke in faltering tones. It

was evident that hunger was gnawing at her.

OH, master! (she began) I don't remember when I was born or where. My memory fails in these little particulars. But I was the daughter of very rich parents. My father's name was Shrinath and my mother's name was Kundalini. I was their elder child. I had a younger brother. My mother was a bit absent-minded and would often forget people and things. But she was a simple innocent soul. Father was very rich. He often went on tour and would return home with lots of money.

He was very fond of me and when our visitors and relations remarked that I was a very beautiful girl with a dazzling complexion he felt very proud. My parents did everything to make me look more fascinating than all the maidens of our community. They adorned me with costly jewels and silks and kept me as an exhibit for all to see.

I was fourteen years old when Mother took me to a car festival in the neighbouring town. She muffled up the baby in woollen clothes and hoisted him on her waist. We stayed there in a friend's house and spent two days because the temple car would take three days to go round the streets and reach its original stand. The town was bursting with crowds of pilgrims from all parts.

One night when we were out, Mother suddenly decided to take my little brother back to the house where we were staying because he had developed fever and asked me to follow her closely.

Fool that I was, I did not follow my mother. I knew the street and the house where we were put up, and went in the direction of the merry-go-round which I liked very much to see in motion. It was situated on the outskirts of the town—on a field near a lake. I stood there gazing for hours, laughing in excitement at the children riding on their horses and whirling round.

It must have been getting on for midnight. I was a bit sleepy too. The grounds were being deserted when four men grabbed me and bundled me into a pony-carriage. One man closed my mouth with a small ball of cloth, another man tied my hands and feet with ropes. I wanted to kick and shout and scratch at the fellows' faces with my finger-nails. The leader of them, who was a goonda with a bushy crop and terrific moustache, struck my face with his fist repeatedly until blood spurted from my nose and no noise came from my throat. And then I lost all consciousness.

I woke up to find myself in a dark room with an old woman attending on me. My first impulse was to scream and run

The New Housemaid

The Story So Far :

[Janet, the new servant-maid, caused quite a sensation with her perfect green eyes and her friendship for the neighbouring cats, which crowded the house of Miss Charlotte. Was Janet herself a cat in the form of a woman? Once even a dog chased her up a tree! The mistress of the house was alarmed to find many edible things missing from the kitchen larder. The cream in the milk, the fish and the chicken were stolen every night. And Miss Charlotte sat up to watch. A fierce growling, such as a tiger makes at the zoo at feeding time over something toothsome, which it fears mother beast may snatch from it, fell upon Miss Charlotte's ear, and in the same moment her peering eyes were held by two green lights moving about the larder—two shining eyes that travelled with the deep sound of growling.]

kitten was shut up in the kitchen, also that the larder door was shut, and the safe likewise. Some filleted plaice was in the latter, awaiting breakfast time. Should that plaice follow the salmon, Miss Charlotte meant at all costs to discover the thief.

The parlour lamp was beginning to burn low, and the granny clock in the corner had already

BY

Mrs. J. O. Arnold

WITH this end in view she sat up long after Janet had come in to say good-night according to custom, her appearance signifying that Miss Charlotte's bedroom candle-stick awaited her in the hall, as usual. Silence reigned. Miss Charlotte found her attention straying from the book in front of her. Though her eyes were fixed upon the printed words, her ears were listening too acutely for her to take in their sense.

She had seen that the ginger

struck the hour of midnight, with unusual sonorousness in the stillness of the house, when a sound from the kitchen caught her strained attention. She distinctly heard a door open...

No sleuth-hound could have been swifter, more keen than Miss Charlotte. Cream and salmon rankled in her mind, roused her to instant action. That very afternoon milk of the skimmiest had deprived her usual dulcet cup of tea...Discovery and vengeance were at

but it was a useless attempt. The room was well guarded by two hefty men who showed me their gleaming daggers and threatened to plunge them into my body if I attempted to do any such foolish thing. I felt all over my body and realised that I had been robbed of all my jewels. I did not know where I had been brought. I at first refused the food given to me by the old woman but she seemed to be kind and warm-hearted. She spoke gently, hinting at more tortures if I did not eat or drink. I ate food which tasted like ashes in my mouth. I was thinking all the while of my wretched parents who must have been weeping bitterly and eating their hearts out in the search for me.

MASTER, is it not enough if I say that the leader of the ruffians made me his mistress and kept me in his power for nearly two years? I was all the time resentful and tried to wreak my vengeance on him. One night I thought he was dead drunk and would not get up for several hours. So I opened the door and ran out of the house. I stumbled into the streets and asked some people where the police station was. But I never knew that his men were trailing me.

They caught hold of me before I had gone far, told enquiring passers-by that I was not right in my head and dragged me

back to the devil's house. When he was roused from his sleep and learnt from his men what I had attempted to do he took out a whip and lashed at me until I swooned. Then, after a few hours, I felt my face burning and shrieked aloud. Master, they applied red-hot irons to my eyes and gouged them out. They kept me in the dark room for three months. Then one day a man was brought in to appraise me. He was the chief of beggars operating in two cities. He paid some three hundred rupees for me, and took me away to another city.

THE very sight of me moved many passers-by who dropped coins into my tin and the beggar chief would come behind me, though at a distance, and watch my collection. Then one day he disappeared because the police were after him. I then fell into the clutches of another man who is one-legged. I am now his mistress but my earnings have dropped considerably. I have only one desire, master, to die in peace.....

I coughed again. "What was the name of your brother? Can you recollect?"

"Yes, Master. It was Gopal," she replied. "But he was only a baby then."

—Please see page 59

hand! Already the ginger kitten as good as had a brick tied round its neck, descendant of of deities or not.

SHE crept soundlessly to the kitchen, candle in hand. A smothered cry escaped her at sight of two cockroaches which lay flat and motionless until her footfall warned them of her approach, when they rose upon legs—horrible sight! and scuttered away into the shadows. But Miss Charlotte was not out to hunt cockroaches. She had other game in view.

Her first rapid glance around showed her the ginger kitten asleep in a chair—her second, that the larder door was partly open. Could there be a burglar lurking within? Miss Charlotte, goaded by recollections of her wrongs, marched boldly in.

Immediately her candle went out in a sudden draught from the open, wire-protected window, and she found herself in complete darkness.

A fierce growling, such as a tiger makes at the zoo at feeding time over something toothsome, which it fears mother beast may snatch from it, fell upon Miss Charlotte's ear, and in the same moment her peering eyes were held by two green lights moving about the larder—two shining eyes that travelled with the deep sound of growling.

Panic seized Miss Charlotte, as well it might with those tiger-eyes and that fierce wild-beast noise at close quarters! She turned and fled precipitately through the kitchen and back into the lamp-lit parlour. There she stood watching the open door in a kind of horrible fascination—dreading that whatever the creature was, it might follow her...A soft, padding step crossed the hall, but for the silence of the house it would have been inaudible. But Miss Charlotte heard it, and instantly summoning her courage went out to investigate. At once she beheld—Kate.

"WHAT are you doing down here at this time of night?" Miss Charlotte demanded sternly. The girl was only partly dressed, with a dark cloak over her shoulders. In the lamplight the pupils of her strange eyes were narrowed to mere slits.

"I came down to see if the safe was fastened—"

As she spoke a strong smell of fish assailed Miss Charlotte's nostrils. Upon the girl's cheek was plainly visible a thick smear of cream.

"You go tomorrow. I prefer to pay a month's wages and get rid of a servant with nocturnal habits—" Miss Charlotte said with an air of majestic finality.

Next morning, when Janet brought in her mistress' breakfast, she announced that the ginger kitten was gone!

"And taken with fish with it—or else ate it last night, ma'am. Anyway, the safe was open again and not a sign of any plaice. And the cream fair lapped off the milk bowl. So I've poached an egg. But how that kitten opened two doors—"

"Send Kate to me!"

Miss Charlotte paid the girl, and in half an hour she, too, was gone.

Perfect tranquillity followed upon the departure of kitten and maid. Not a cat came near the house. No caterwaulings disturbed the night hours. Miss Charlotte's cream was thick as of yore, her fish, both cooked and raw, remained untouched in the safe.

Janet appeared thoughtful after her fellow-servant's departure. In a day or two she eased her mind.

"I don't want another girl—nor a kitten neither," she announced to Miss Charlotte's relief. "I've had enough with them two. There've been some queer goings on in this house

since they came—they were just a pair of cats both of 'em, to my thinking."

"I entirely agree with you," Miss Charlotte answered with conviction. ††

—(Concluded.)

The Girl Who Strayed

—Continued from page 56

My friend, Gopal, came just then, carrying two packets of food. I gave these to the woman along with two more rupees. She was immensely pleased and invoked God's blessings upon us. I quickly left the scene with Gopal. My heart was thudding. I knew Gopal had lost his elder sister during a car festival. ††

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ORATORS WHO SHOOK AN EMPIRE

By R. K. SURENDRANATH

DO speakers and writers, need inspiration to be at their best? They are lazy as a rule and need to be prodded or persuaded, as the case may be. Of course, there are exceptions to this rule. Among orators there were several in the pre-freedom era, who were resourceful and ready-witted and could speak *extempore* on any given subject. They would talk as fluently and forcefully on the one-world ideal, represented by the League of Nations, as on the need to have a park for brightening the lives of some slum dwellers.

The late S. Satyamurthi seldom prepared any notes or digested points for a speech. Whether on the floor of the Central Legislative Assembly or on the platform of a political meeting he kept the heads of his listeners reeling with his eloquence which flowed like an unin-

terrupted stream. Cogent and coherent were his arguments and whenever he was heckled he rose to brilliant heights. His retorts were pungent and biting and were often quoted by friends and opponents alike.

Polished Speaker

Bhulabhai Desai was one of the best polished speakers, who threw himself heart and soul into the freedom struggle. He often travelled with Satyamurthi and the two presented a pleasing contrast—the one appealing to the heart and the other to the head. Bhulabhai argued the case for freedom like a ruthless logician or a lawyer holding a brief. His points were unanswerable. Satyamurthi afforded sheer entertainment. Even Europeans sneaked in to enjoy his speeches. In the Central Legislative Assembly Satyamurthi was the only member of the

Congress Legislature Party, who was permitted by Mahatma Gandhi to speak as he liked. In those days, only the leader of the Opposition (Congress) could take part in the debates and answer the leader of the House. The orator felt that such a gagging order would make him go mad, since speech was the very breath of his life. His verbal duels with the members of the Treasury Bench and barbed wit enlivened the proceedings and made the alien rulers quake in fear from head to boot!

K. F. Nariman was a contemporary of Satyamurthi and was a dominating force in the politics of the country. He was fiery and flashy and would cross swords with anyone, be it in the Congress or outside.

The Nightingale

Srinivasa Sastri's eloquence was of an altogether different type. The literary grace and charm of his speeches compelled the admiration of the English-speaking world and earned the title of "silver-tongued orator." He never hit his opponent below the belt; he shed more light than heat through his arguments. Though he belonged to the Liberal Party and was often a severe critic of the Congress he was held in high esteem by the Mahatma and all the leaders of the High Command.

And then there was Sarojini Naidu—that full-throated musical nightingale in our midst—who

warbled on political freedom. Her inimitable songs carried the nation far on the road towards its goal of independence.

Sardar Patel breathed fire and brimstone. He was as great an orator as he was an organizer. His speeches were brief and to the point but each word of his had the effect of a bullet aimed at the foreign ruler and stirred up the people as no other leader did. He made very few gestures that we often associate with orators. Often he was too weak to stand up and address the audience. Few would think that the man who had no button to his shirt and who looked as modest and unassuming as a villager who had just strayed into the city could sway his audience and spur the nation to action.

The Two Lions

We had two lions in our midst, who told the British lion to go back. With his arms akimbo, Lala Lajpat Rai, the Lion of the Punjab, was a picturesque and impressive figure on the platform. He seldom raised his voice but every word of his went home. The British ruler was terribly afraid of the dynamic power of his words.

The other lion was T. Prakasam, the Andhra Kesari, as he was better known. Before he opened his mouth there would be a painful silence extending over five—sometimes even ten—minutes. But the audience, familiar with his ways, would patiently wait

and then, there would be a torrential flow of eloquence. Prakasam would keep on thundering against the British bureaucracy. And he was as brave and dramatic in his deeds as he was in words. Once when there was police firing he bared his chest and invited those who dared, to aim a bullet at it. Fear was a total stranger to him.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya was a persuasive speaker, with a reputation for old-world courtesy and mildness of language. But as the years passed by the saint slowly withdrew from the sphere of politics though his zeal for freedom did not diminish a jot to the last.

The Magician

Mahatma Gandhi was not an orator in the strict sense of the term. But he was a magician who cast a spell on his listeners. His thoughts were more powerful than his words which proved to be inadequate vehicles.

Are there giants in our midst comparable to those great orators? There are any number of brilliant speakers but we have very few orators. Our own Prime Minister belongs to the former group. He can speak extempore on many subjects with authority but the hypnotic power of the orator is missing in his speeches. One foreign critic recorded his impression that Pandit Nehru spoke sonorously like an Oxford lecturer. But this much we know. The world pricks up its ears and listens when Pandit Nehru makes a pronouncement. And the keynote of all his utterances is sincerity and fearlessness.

For the making of an orator there should have to be several factors at work. Some great ideal or motive must animate an individual and lend a glow to his gift of expression. ‡

POLITICAL WAR!

"A political war is one in which everyone shoots from the lip."—RAYMOND MOLEY

"Politicians never love nor hate."

—LORD CHESTERFIELD

"In politics, only a young man can afford to look tired. If a man well along in years still wants to be elected to office he has to demonstrate that despite the actuarial tables, he's in the prime of life."

—EDWIN O'CONNOR

IN LIGHTER VEIN

BLESSED ARE THE IDLE!

By M. V. CHANDRAN

OUR countrymen have been declared by an international expert team to be the laziest people in the world! Few will agree with such a wrong-headed verdict. It implies that we are also the idlest!

Personally, however, far from being dejected or sunken down by this observation, I have been inspired into a rare spurt of activity—to make an expert study into the why and wherefore of the finding. My analysis, I am sure, will offer consolation as well as useful guidance to my fellowmen.

Evidently, the team has made an expert study of both our public and private life. The bulk of our man hours of idleness has, beyond doubt, come from the several kinds of helpless impasse in our day-to-day life. These 'thieves of time' hardly need elaboration beyond the

the mere mention of a few representative ones: queues in all sorts of places, the generous delays in bus stops, railway stations and, of course, train journeys. I have even come across people—of both sexes—who quite often got into wrong buses and trains and went through a sublimely unconscious spree in a timeless wonderland!

Add to these the routine negative man hours in our offices—of the bosses and the employees—and we are left with nothing but a stunned admiration for the expert team's uncanny calculations. To confirm their verdict to a precision, the team, we might suppose, had also at their disposal our band of sadhus and their counterparts. For them, killing time is no labour dire or weary woe, as some of our mighty predecessors complained. They are hereditary pastmasters at the game. Nor

can they descend to the cheap reptile level of the ant to "consider her ways and be wise," as the Testament calls out to them in vain. They know too well what the ant ends up with—someone steps on it, sooner or later.

Way to Peace

Whether or not the team will agree, I assert that idleness hath its own virtues and sweet advantages, which presently constitute our main defence against the verdict. History records people who attained immortality in idleness. The philosophical Diogenes lived in a tub and the mighty Alexander himself conferred on him the privilege that nothing should stand between him and the sun. The Lady Shalott spent all her days watching in a mirror processions of people pass by—besides herself, of course, for a change. And if you seek evidence of more recent vintage, Bertrand Russell himself has proclaimed idleness as the way to world peace. That our country has achieved both these distinctions to the very summit, seems to be undisputed by the rest of our world today. The only point of doubt is whether the second is the corollary to the first. If, still, you seek proof by yet another conventional method, take the case of the mighty Atlas. It has been condemned as nothing but "protracted nightmare," whence, by *reductio ad absurdum*, the point in question follows again.

Idleness does not conspire

clashes as work does. And the so-called idle rainbow is no less a beautiful wonder than the labouring sea; in fact, it is not as devastating as the other.

Great Forces

Our idleness is only a condition of relaxed activity in a world where life keeps hurtling at a delirious speed, outside and away from us all the time, regardless of our individual needs and calamities. Escape from the obsessive tyranny of time is a necessary condition for dispassionate and true understanding of ourselves and the rest of the world. It is now too full of people mechanically rushing into the gates of death with hectic activity and a craziness for punctuality.

The venerable expert team and its faithful followers need to be reminded of the caution Stevenson wisely sounded: that extreme 'busyness' is a symptom of deficient vitality. Its truth has more than doubled in our critical neurotic world today. And "pleasures," he further pointed out, "are more beneficial than duties because, like the quality of mercy, they are not strained, and they are twice blest." Hectic activity, like the curse of Babel, is a punishment for man's inordinate vanity and ambition, with an unfounded faith in progress. It is in stillness and silence, that great forces are born and prepare for action and that is evidently what our apparent empty state of idleness implies!

Parting Of The Ways

By E. M. K. NAYAR

THE train steamed into the station in the early hours of the morning. Lt. Kishore rolled his bed up and jumped out of the compartment. The platform was unusually empty save for a few railway officials and a sleepy porter with a lantern. There was evidently none to give him news about his mother's health. He rushed out of the station, hailed a town as an officer would be to see his bed-ridden mother. Kishore was desperately anxious to see his beloved mother who had been to him everything on earth. He had not been fortunate to be fondled and loved by his father who had left him for good when he was only in the cradle. And it was his mother who showered all parental affection on him. It was she who brought

Shanta and Kishore were very much in love but his mother forbade him to marry. And he was an obedient son. . .

passing taxi and proceeded to his house.

It was the first home-coming of Kishore after he had been commissioned in the Army; and it did not even occur to him that his flying visit to his home

him up, educated him, guided him and ultimately made him a well paid officer in the army. Having been so inextricably attached to his mother, Lt. Kishore could not for a moment think of losing her.

"Your house, Sir," the driver announced.

KISHORE sprang out of the car, paid the fare and darted into the house eager to see his ailing mother.

A woman in her late fifties was sitting in the aristocratically furnished hall.

"I am very happy, son, that you have come." She looked steadily into his eyes. "What a change in you, Kishore!" she said.

"How on earth are you sitting here in the hall, mother, when you are supposed to be confined to bed? Aren't you ill? Or have you recovered completely?" the confused Kishore asked.

"Yes, son, I am ill, very much so. Leave your things there and have your breakfast first. We shall talk leisurely later."

Lt. Kishore was at a loss to size up the situation. Here was his mother, reported ill, sitting before him hale and healthy, active and cheerful, with no symptom of having been ill in the recent past.

The breakfast was soon over and Kishore went up to his mother.

"There is some mystery somewhere, mother. Why don't you clear it? Why did you send me a false telegram?"

"Don't be so impatient, Kishore. I admit that I have been a little untrue to you. You may however rest assured that whatever I do will be only to promote your happiness."

"But it is strange that you who had been so honest in the past should have frightened me like this."

"Well Kishore, I shall now place before you all the facts. You have come here to see the girl I have chosen for you."

She paused for a while.

"Listen, son. I am in the evening of my life and when I am gone, there will be none to love you and to attend to your needs. Yes, I wish to see you married. I wish to see your son before I die. Your marriage, therefore, shall be celebrated before your leave expires."

"I AM so sorry I have pained your heart," she continued, "but I would not have done so had it not been for the adverse reports I have been receiving about you."

"Has anyone been endeavouring to bias your mind against me, mother?"

"Who on earth could set me against my only son? Far from it. Tell me, Kishore, is it not true that you have been corresponding with Shanta, the postmaster's daughter? Could

you refute that you are madly in love with that bankrupt's daughter?.....You have been pulling my leg, Kishore. That shall not continue. You shall not bring shame on our family by going mad after a girl who has nothing but her bodily beauty to recommend her. And that is why I have arranged for your marriage. I am sure Nalini will make a very good wife for you."

Kishore knitted his brows. He was both annoyed and vexed.

"You are talking unmitigated nonsense, mother. Shanta was my school-mate and there is no further connection between us."

"Be true to your mother, Kishore. You are very young and you cannot take mature decisions. You are being led astray by a set of greedy, ignoble idiots. Do not forget yourself. Realise your duty to your mother."

Kishore could no more suppress the truth.

"I love Shanta and I have given her my word of honour. I have promised her that I will marry her. I cannot forget her and I cannot go back on my word."

"That sounds strange, son. Is it you, my own son, who talk of disobeying your mother? How do you say that you love her?

Get out of this adolescent fantasy, Kishore; and forget her once for all."

"I have loved you, mother, ever since I have known how to love. You have been everything to me. But..."

"But?"

"BUT I cannot marry anyone other than Shanta. She is noble, good and loving."

"Stop eulogising the supposed virtues of that silly girl."

Kishore was at his wit's end.

"If you love me, mother, if you are interested in furthering my happiness, if you are desirous of making my life full, then take Shanta as your daughter-in-law."

"Pooh, Shanta to be my daughter-in-law! That will never happen. That will not happen so long as I am alive. Take it from me, Kishore, the day you marry her you will find my corpse."

Kishore pursed his lips.

"Be not irritated, mother. I will not in my life disobey you. But if at all I marry anyone that will be Shanta."

"You will not listen to reason and so I have nothing more to

say; but I warn you, if you continue your connections with her you will be forfeiting your mother's love," so saying she left the room hurriedly, banging the door behind her.

THE storm was over and that explained his mother's illness. Kishore had no mental peace. He was in the most perplexing situation. There was an inner struggle, a struggle in his mind, a struggle between head and heart, a war between duty and love. He could not for a moment think of disobeying his noble mother, the one who had sacrificed every comfort of hers for his betterment, the one in whose affection there was no tinge of selfishness. All the same he could not dispel from his mind thoughts about his Shanta, his only love, the idol of his heart.

Kishore wondered as to why society considered marriage as mainly based on pecuniary consideration and family status. Was it not strange and ridiculous, he thought, that spontaneous love between the partners, which should be considered as the most essential of any marriage, should be relegated to the background?

A month passed. Kishore who had not called on Shanta all these days could not further resist the desire to meet her; and that evening he walked towards Shanta's house. Immersed in thoughts and oblivious of the surroundings he walked into

Shanta's house little knowing that his love was standing on the terrace watching him enter the house.

"Kishore!" Down flew Shanta in her glad surprise, meeting him in the hall and falling upon him in her great delight.

"Oh, Kishore, the sun has shone now. What have you come for? You have not been writing to me for a month past."

Kishore could perceive a whole world of love in her bright, brown, expressive eyes.

"I have come on leave to see my ailing mother and have been here for a month."

"What are you talking, Kishore? How could you keep away from me all these days? Tell me, there is something fishy about it."

"Things have taken an awkward turn, Shanta. Mother has been ill-advised about our connections."

"What did she say? How is her illness?"

"SHE is not ill. She has summoned me here to marry Nalini, whom perhaps you know."

"And you have agreed, Kishore?"

A hot flush passed over her.

She struggled with her emotion, struggled bravely, but silently.

"I have told her that I will never disobey her."

"OH, Kishore" exclaimed Shanta, clasping her hands, all her pent up feelings bursting forth and tears streaming from her eyes.

Kishore took her hand in one of his, the other hand round her waist and held her before him, never speaking, only looking at her face.

They sat silently in the darkening room. The twilight fell softly upon Shanta. Kishore watched her carefully. His mind absorbed the details of her. She wore a scarlet jacket and a white cotton saree. Her hair was long, eyes brown and enchanting and her legs long and shapely with slender ankles. As he watched her, Kishore wondered as to how he could ever think of losing her. He liked every inch of her, right from her black lustrous hair to her elegant toes.

"Be not worried, darling," he consoled her.

Shanta looked gently upon him.

"I shall be leaving tomorrow, Shanta; but rest assured that I am leaving my mind here. Let us hope that the day will soon come when you and I will marry with the full consent of my mother."

Nobody thought that the war would break out so suddenly. News was flashed that the country would be requiring all the able-bodied men and plenty of nurses. People were asked through the radio to be eternally vigilant. Shanta was rather happy at the turn of events.

Lt. Kishore, who had been promoted as Captain, had been on the war-front for three months. He had won the most decisive victory but had been wounded seriously. It was when he was returning to the camp after the operations were over, that a stray bullet hit him on his shoulder. He fell flat on the ground, hitting his forehead on a pointed stone. And he was immediately rushed to the military hospital.

KISHORE was lying on a cot in a small room in the hospital. The sharp pain crept into his brain. He moved restlessly on the bed. He opened his eyes. He closed them quickly. He opened them again but the pain remained heavy and stupefying. Kishore slowly pushed himself to a sitting position. His head reeled. He felt terribly thirsty and fell on the bed.

Suddenly, without any preliminary sound, in the midst of utter stillness, the door of the room swung slowly open; a doctor in military uniform and a young nurse entered the room.

"Ah, Kishore!" cried the nurse and flew towards the cot.

The doctor was visibly confused.

"You know him, nurse?" he asked.

"Yes, doctor; he.....he..... belongs to my home town."

THE doctor examined the wounds, washed them well and bandaged them both.

"Be here, nurse, for a couple of hours, till he regains consciousness. When he opens his eyes give him the mixture."

When the doctor was out of sight, the nurse moved close to Kishore. She felt his pulse and looked at him anxiously.

She sat beside Kishore with mixed feelings. The yellow light from the lamp beat upon her beautiful but sorrowful face. An hour passed. Kishore slowly opened his eyes. He murmured something unintelligible. She put a couple of tablets in hot water and when they had dissolved took it over to Kishore.

"Swallow this, Kishore, I am your Shanta."

Kishore did as he was told, looked at Shanta for a minute and closed his eyes again.

Days passed into weeks and weeks into months. Captain Kishore was now able to walk

about without support and he knew that he owed his life to Shanta.

Capt. Kishore and Shanta were sitting in the backyard of the hospital. Their minds were full of thoughts. They had plenty to say but the words stuck in their throats. At last Kishore broke the silence.

"How did you get enlisted in the army, Shanta?"

"I volunteered my services," she said. "You know that I had received some training, when I was a school student, in nursing. And that stood me in good stead here. I knew that I would be able to meet you somewhere here. That hope gave me encouragement and I am now here seeing how well my hopes have been realised"

"The war will soon be over, Shanta, and you will then be released. But I would not like you to forsake me now. I do not want you to leave me here. Oh, how I wish that the war had lasted for some more days!"

"DON'T be silly, Kishore. Wherever I go, I shall be yours and only yours. I have given my love to you and that cannot be taken back."

"You shall not go, Shanta. I have decided to write to mother in detail and I am sure she will agree to our marriage. When we get her reply, we shall

go to our place where our marriage will be celebrated."

It was a great relief to Kishore's mother to learn that the war was over. She had every day been waiting for a detailed letter from Kishore and on that afternoon, when she saw the postman, holding a letter, and turning towards her house she knew for certain that it was Kishore's letter. Kishore had explained in the letter how he was wounded and how he was saved from death. He wrote ".....she has thus saved my life. But for her devotion and sacrifice you would now be sonless. Will it not be proper if we choose her as a member of our family? Will you not bless me if I decide to marry her?"

Kishore's mother did not take much time to inform him that she had no objection to his marrying that noble lady; but that the marriage should be celebrated only at her house...

"Don't you want to see your daughter-in-law?" Kishore asked his mother when he got down from the car.

"Let us go in, Kishore," the old lady said.

Kishore and his mother sat in the hall. Shanta went towards Kishore's mother, bowed down and touched her feet respectfully.

"Rise up, my daughter. You are the lady of this house. And, well, let me have some coffee from you."

Shanta went towards the kitchen.

"Well, Kishore, what is her name? I think I have seen her somewhere. But I cannot place her. She is really sweet."

Kishore explained to his mother how Shanta had joined the army and all that happened thereafter.

With a twinkle in his eyes he asked his mother, "How can you take her as your daughter-in-law? She has nothing but her bodily beauty to recommend her. That is what you told me some months ago."

"ARE you teasing me, Kishore? We are all fallible. I like her and I know that you love each other. Her father may be financially poor. That has nothing to do with your marrying her. Who else will love you as much as Shanta does?" She looked at Kishore, her eyes radiating happiness. "Let me however tell you, Kishore," she continued, "that you are very mischievous. This is your victory and Shanta's....nay, it is the victory of true and unselfish love." ††

Questions & Answers

All types of questions from our readers are welcome. Answers may be diverting, informative or instructive as the case may be but under no circumstances is any offence meant to anyone.

A. R. Raksha, Madanapalle

Q.—Generally young boys are anxious to talk with young girls but actually when they see them they get disturbed at the mere sight. What psychology is behind it?

A.—But girls are naturally not anxious for the company of boys. Their cold looks are apt to freeze them. For centuries our women have kept aloof from men. The new climate of freedom does not agree with them.

Q.—What is actual love?

A.—Love takes many forms but you are probably asking about the love between man and woman. What begins as physical love develops into a selfless devotion of woman to man and vice versa.

Radheyshyam Kalwar, Bombay.

Q.—Is there a book in the market in which I can find the names of all the countries of the world and their ruling methods too?

A.—The latest edition of any geography book will give you the information that you want in the first part of your question. Nowadays democracies and dictatorships are falling and changing with such speed that it is impossible to mention the name of any book that is up-to-date. Read some newspaper regularly.

C. R. Bushanam, Madras.

Q.—Do you agree with Indian epics when they tell of saints and kings who led astounding Brahmacharya life?

A.—Whatever things some of our Romeos and Bluebeards may do, always remember that this is the land of rishis, beloved of the Gods. Even the present age of co-operatives and industrialisation cannot change that truth.

D. Mahtani, Madras.

Q.—Is it true that painted lips have magnetic effect?

A.—All that we know is that painted lips are like the postal mark that defaces stamps. When a woman kisses a man her paint smears his face and her wiles seal his fate!

Q.—What does a wise man do when he finds himself in a gathering of fools?

A.—A rat and a frog tied themselves together to signify their friendship. When the frog jumped into a pond the rat was drowned. Similar will be the end of the wise man!

Nawal Malhotra, Delhi.

Q.—Whose kiss is more warm—that of a boy or a girl?

A.—It all depends, my dear sir, who runs after whom? The “chaser” wants to set the “chased” on fire and then the fire consumes the chaser ultimately. Tell us who chases whom?

V. Hari Babu, Kharagpur.

Q.—What measures should our Government adopt to have an easy settlement of the Kashmir crisis?

A.—Such measures as will effectively convince the Pakistanis that one shot from their side will be answered with ten.

Q.—How will our country become as prosperous and scientifically advanced as the U. S. S. R.?

A.—We do not want to imitate the U. S. S. R. where individual liberty is unknown. For instance, a man who is regarded as a nuisance by the Moscow Government will be deported to some labour camp 2,000 miles away. He will never see his family again and die there after toiling like a slave. Of what use is such prosperity?

This month's prize of five rupees for the best question has been awarded to: V. Hari Babu, Kharagpur.

PLANETS & YOUR FORTUNE

The following predictions are based on the movement of the Nine Planets in the 12 Rasis according to Gochara. The positions of the planets from Janma Rasi (Moon's Place) are taken into account in forecasting the effects. Those running a favourable Dasa or Bhukthi will experience the evil effects in a lesser degree and those running malefic Dasa or Bhukthi will experience the evil effects in a greater measure.

[Astrological Forecasts for March 1959]

By T. V. RAMAN

MESHA

(Aswini 4, Bharani 4, Krithigai 1.)

Mars, Lord of the Lagna, is placed in the 2nd house and is aspected by Jupiter. Your health will no doubt be good. Rahu in the 6th house, Saturn in the 9th house and Kethu in the 12th house indicate gains. Venus and Sun in the 11th house also indicate gains. Thus the month is prosperous in general. Jupiter in the 8th house is the only planet that will cause evil. Those in jobs will have a smooth time. Those in business will make good progress. Those engaged in politics and social service will thrive. But the month is not good for specul-

ation. Avoid journeys as far as possible. There may be sorrowful news owing to the presence of Jupiter in the 8th house. Devote your spare time to prayer. Lucky Days: 7th, 18th and 21st.

Household women will find the month unhappy due to the presence of Jupiter in the 8th house. Devote your time to prayer and meditation. Women in jobs and those studying will pull through. Women engaged in politics and social service may not find the month good. Film actresses will have a good time. Avoid journeys. Girls of marriageable age will have to wait the whole of this year for

getting married. Lucky Days: 5th, 15th and 25th.

VRISHABHA

(Krithigai 3, Rohini 4, Mrigasirsha 2.)

Venus, Lord of the Lagna, is both in the 11th house and 12th house which is exalted. Your health will be normal. Your popularity will be on the increase, but Saturn in the 8th house will cause you great distress. Avoid journeys. Those in services will be held to blame. Businessmen will meet with great loss. The month is not good in general. Devote your time to prayer and meditation. Avoid new investments. Jupiter in the 7th house will put up resistance and will enable you to pull through. Lucky Days: 18th and 21st.

Household women will be happy on the home front. Saturn in the 8th house will, however, cause evil. The month is average. Devote your spare time to prayer and meditation.

Women in jobs and those studying will, however, manage well. The month is good for film actresses and those engaged in politics and social service. Avoid journeys. Take great care of your health. Lucky Days: 9th and 19th.

MITHUNA

(Mrigasirsha 2, Arudra 4, Punarvasu 3)

Mercury, Lord of the 8th Lagna, is in the 9th and 10th houses. This is a good thing. But Jupiter in the 6th house and

Saturn in the 7th house will, however, cause evil. You may hear some sorrowful news. The month is not good in general. Those in jobs will manage well due to the presence of Kethu in the 10th house. Rahu in the 4th house will cause distress in the household. Please devote your spare time to prayers and meditation. Avoid journeys. The month is not good for businessmen and politicians. Lucky Days: 8th and 18th.

Household women will find the month miserable owing to the presence of Jupiter in the 6th house and Saturn in the 7th house. Some one near and dear may fall seriously ill. The household will be unhappy due to the presence of Rahu in the 4th house. The finances will be poor. Please devote your spare time to prayer and meditation.

Women in jobs and those studying will pull through. Take great care of your health. Avoid journeys. Women engaged in politics and social service will not find the month promising. Lucky Days: 8th, 18th and 21st.

KATAKA

(Punarvasu 1, Pushya 4, Aslesha 4.)

The month is an excellent one for people belonging to this rasi. Jupiter in the 5th house and Saturn in the 6th house promise great future and a splendid time. Rahu in the 3rd house will bring you gains. Those in jobs will

thrive. Businessmen will find the month very prosperous. The finances will be pouring. Those in jobs will thrive remarkably. Those engaged in politics or social service will have an excellent time. The month is a prosperous one from all points. Lucky Days : 8th, 17th and 21st.

Household women will find the month excellent. Your health will be good. The finances will be pouring. There will be auspicious functions at home. Women in jobs and those studying will prosper. Some unmarried women will get married. Some may become expectant mothers. The month is equally good for those engaged in politics or social service. Lucky Days : 8th, 18th and 21st.

SIMHA

(Makara 4, Pooram 4, Uthira 1.)

Sun, Lord of the Lagna, is in the 7th house. Your health will, therefore, be good. Jupiter in the 4th house, however, will cause distress on the home front. Saturn in the 5th house will keep you worried. Rahu in the 2nd house and Kethu in the 8th house indicate risks through accidents. Avoid journeys. Those in jobs will have to be cautious. Those engaged in business should be very careful lest they incur loss. The month is not good in general. Devote your time to prayer and meditation. Lucky Days : 8th and 18th.

Household women will not

find the month good. Take great care of your health. Your children may fall sick. Avoid journeys. Devote your time to prayer and meditation. Women studying and those in jobs will do well. The month is equally good for those engaged in politics and social service. Lucky Days : 8th and 18th.

KANYA

(Uthira 3, Hastha 4, Chitra 2.)

Mercury, Lord of the Lagna, is hidden in the 6th house for the major part of the month. This apart, Rahu is in the Janma. Your health will therefore undergo a great setback. Please take great care of your health. Jupiter in the 3rd house indicates misery and wasteful and avoidable expenses. You can to some extent mitigate the evil influences by prayer and meditation. Saturn in the 7th house will worsen the situation. Kethu in the 7th house will result in some useless journey. The beneficial planets are Mars and Venus only. They are also under check. Those in jobs will have a tough time and will be held to blame. Those in business will meet with failure. The month is a very bad one unless you run a favourable Dasa. The month is certainly very bad for speculations. The finances will be poor. Politicians and those engaged in social services will find themselves in a tight corner. Lucky Days : 3rd and 13th.

For household women the month is very unlucky. Their

health will be gravely affected. The finances will be very poor. The household will be very unhappy due to Jupiter in the 3rd house and Saturn in the 4th house. Devote your time to prayer and meditation. The month is not good for journeys. Women in jobs and those studying will pull through. Women engaged in politics or social service will just get on. Lucky Days : 2nd and 22nd.

THULA

(Chitra 2, Swathi 4, Visaka 3.)

Venus, Lord of the Lagna, is placed in the 5th and exalted house. Your health will be good. Your popularity will be on the increase. The month is an excellent one. Jupiter in the 2nd house, Saturn in the 3rd house and Kethu in the 6th house indicate gain. Your finances will be steady. Those in jobs will get promoted. Those in business will meet with a boom. The month is excellent for politicians and those engaged in social service. The month is good for speculators. Lucky Days : 8th, 18th and 21st.

Household women will find this month excellent due to Jupiter in the 2nd house. Your health will be excellent. The finances will be pouring. Those in jobs or studying will find this month very good. Some unmarried girls will get married. Some

married women will become expectant mothers. Lucky Days : 9th, 19th and 21st.

VRISCHIKA

(Visaka 1, Anuradha 4, Jyeshtha 4.)

Mars, Lord of the Lagna, is in the 7th Kendra, which is good. But you have another 2½ years of 7½ years' Saturn. Further Jupiter is in Janma. Your health will not be good. Please take great care of your health. The finances will be poor. Those in jobs will be held to blame. Businessmen will meet with loss. Avoid new investments. The month is not good in general. The month is also not good for speculators. Lucky Days : 7th and 17th.

The health of the household women will not be good. The finances will be poor. The household will be unhappy due to Jupiter in Janma. The month is not good in general. Devote your time to prayer and meditation. Women in jobs and those studying will find the month manageable. Women engaged in politics or social service will pull through. Film actresses will, however, gain well. Lucky Days : 7th and 17th.

DHANUS

(Moola 4, Poorada 4, Utharada 1.)

You are undergoing the Janma rasi besides Jupiter in the 12th house. Your health will be awfully affected unless you run

a favourable Dasa. Kethu in the 4th house will keep you no doubt cheerful in the office. Take care of your health. Avoid journeys and cycle-riding. Businessmen will have to be cautious in all directions lest they should incur heavy loss. The month is not good in general. Mars in the 6th house indicates great gains. The month is not good for politicians or social workers. Lucky Days : 11th, 21st and 23rd.

Household women will find the month very miserable. Your health will be affected. The finances will be poor. Those engaged in jobs will find the month good. Women engaged in politics or social service will have a tough time. Avoid journeys. Lucky Days : 10th, 13th and 23rd.

MAKARA

(Utharada 3, Sravana 4, Dhanishta 2.)

* You have just commenced 7½ years' Saturn. Your health will be affected. Kethu in 3rd house and Jupiter in the 11th house will put up resistance. Avoid journeys and cycle-riding. Those in jobs will manage as usual. The finances will be average. Businessmen should be cautious. Those engaged in politics or social service will find

the month tough. Lucky Days 8th, 18th and 27th.

The health of the household women will be gravely affected. The finances will be poor. Your household will be no doubt happy due to the presence of Jupiter in the 11th house. Devote your time to prayer and meditation. The month is not good. Avoid journeys and travels. Women in jobs and those studying will pull through. Those who are having film career will make good progress. Lucky Days : 7th, 17th and 19th.

KUMBHA

(Dhanishta 2, Sathabhisha 4, Poorattadhi 3.)

Saturn, Lord of the Lagna, is placed in the 11th house. Your health will be good. You will have unexpected gains for 2½ years to come. Rahu in the 8th house will cause risks through accidents. The month is not good for journeys. Those in jobs will have a tough time due to Jupiter in the 10th house. Businessmen will meet with loss. Devote your time to prayer and meditation. The month is not good for those engaged in social service or politics. Lucky Days : 7th and 17th.

The health of the household women will be good. Children will fall ill owing to Jupiter in the 10th house. Saturn in the 11th house will, however, offer resistance. The month is not

good in general. Unmarried women will have to wait the whole of this year for marriage. Those in jobs will pull through. The month is good for film actresses and social workers. Lucky Days : 11th and 21st.

MEENA

(Poorattadhi 1, Uthirattadhi 4, Revathi 4.)

The month is an excellent one. Your health will be good owing to Jupiter in the 9th house. Saturn in the 10 house promises success in your career. Kethu

in Janma indicates risks through accidents. Avoid cycle-riding and journeys. Rahu in the 7th house indicates a distant journey no doubt for good. Businessmen will meet with good profits. All others will find the month lucky in general. Lucky Days : 6th, 11th and 17th.

Unmarried women will get married. Some married women may become expectant mothers. Those in jobs and studying will find the month lucky. Lucky Days : 8th, 17th and 19th. ‡

ONE QUESTION FOR RUPEE ONE

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- Co-operate with your teachers.
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- Join youth camps and promote social welfare.
- Remember, dignity of labour is dignity of man.

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WILL GET YOUR FAMILY WASH

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